

US launches historic talks with the PLO

Dismay in Israel as 13-year boycott ends

The US moved swiftly to initiate a face-to-face meeting today with the Palestine Liberation Organization... The UN General Assembly called on the Security Council to organize a Middle East peace conference

By Christopher Walker in Tunis and Andrew McEwen in London

Amid bitter opposition from Israel, the United States yesterday opened talks with the Palestine Liberation Organization, ending a 13-year boycott.

Mr Robert Pelletreau, the US Ambassador in Tunis, initiated what may prove a watershed in the Middle East by telephoning a senior PLO official.

As the contacts were resumed, the UN General Assembly in Geneva called on the Security Council to convene an international Middle East peace conference and place the occupied territories temporarily under UN supervision.

INSIDE

SAS plots Heathrow airline war

By Harvey Elliott Air Correspondent

British Airways, the British flag-carrier which was privatized early last year, could soon be facing direct competition from a new consortium airline operating from its own base at Heathrow Airport, London.

The threat came a step closer yesterday when SAS, the Scandinavian airline which lost the battle for British Caledonian to BA, paid £25 million for a 25 per cent stake in Airlines of Britain, owner of British Midland and the second biggest scheduled carrier in Britain.

SAS and the British Midland group, which also includes Manx Airlines, Loganair and London City Airways, plan a series of new long-haul routes to compete with British Airways.

This will be linked to a world-wide chain of airlines including Thai International for Southeast Asia, Varig in South America, All Nippon in Tokyo, and Texas Air Corporation, the largest airline operator in the United States.

Jobless heads below 2m

Unemployment is set to fall below 2 million early next year, following its 28th successive fall last month. The total dropped by 49,300 to 2.11 million.

Jobless fall, page 23

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Scudamore, first past the century post



Peter Scudamore, the National Hunt jockey, sharing a moment of triumph with his mount, Fa's Lady, at Haydock Park yesterday. Their partnership gave Scudamore his hundredth winner of the season - and in record time. Report, page 40

Signal rules 'not followed' claim as more faults are reported

By Rodney Cowton, Tony Dawe and Roland Rudd

Evidence is emerging of an alarming number of signal faults during the £32 million modernization programme on the line where the train crash at Clapham Junction occurred.

Railway experts claimed yesterday that some technicians installing new cables are failing to follow the proper rules. They called on British Rail to improve training, as an identical fault to the one

thought to have caused Monday's crash was reported.

Details of the faults were given after another morning of chaos on the Waterloo line, caused by a problem on the signal next to the one which is being blamed for the collision which killed 33 people.

The fault was almost the reverse of the one on Monday, when a loose cable is thought to have caused a signal sup-

posed to have been at red to flicker at random to green and yellow.

British Rail's internal inquiry into the disaster continued yesterday as Mr. Paul Channon, Secretary of State for Transport, announced that Mr. Anthony Hadden, QC, a Recorder, would chair the public inquiry into the crash.

Both inquiries will be told by Aslef, the train drivers' union, that the type of signal

failure blamed for Monday's accident occurs on average three times every month throughout the country.

The union gave details yesterday of a disturbing incident on the Waterloo line 13 months ago, when a driver realized that a faulty wire at a set of points had sent a signal to change the light from red to green.

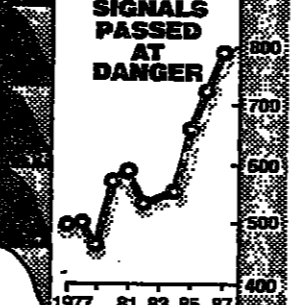
The wire bypassed the relay terminals, which would have resulted in the train crossing over to a track used by express trains travelling the opposite way.

Aslef said: "The train was directed to face the other way as if a car on the motorway turned round on itself. It was a potentially worse accident than on Monday."

The Government is to give £250,000 to the Clapham Rail Disaster Fund, Mrs Thatcher announced yesterday. There were cheers from both sides of the Commons as she announced during Question Time the contribution to the fund set up for victims of Monday's tragedy by the Mayor of Wandsworth.

792 trains ignored red light

By Roland Rudd



The number of trains being driven through signals at red has increased dramatically in recent years, a confidential British Rail report in the hands of The Times reveals.

In 1987 there were 792 such incidents, officially termed "signals passed at danger" (Spad), a rise of 300 over the past eight years.

A dispute developed last night because the report points to driver error as the cause of Spads and union

leaders deny that their men are to blame for all the incidents.

Mr Neil Milligan, general secretary of the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen, said: "British Rail must stop blaming our members for all the signal faults. BR's equipment is not infallible. The tragedy at Clapham Junction demonstrates that."

British Rail yesterday said it could not explain the "rising" Continued on page 22, col 4

Government prepares safety measures

Egg producer to sue Currie

By Philip Webster, David Sapsted and John Young

One of Britain's largest egg producers last night started legal action against Mrs Edwina Currie, the junior health minister, claiming damages for the loss caused by her remarks that most of the country's egg production was infected with salmonella.

Thames Valley Eggs, one of the country's "big four" producers, issued a writ against Mrs Currie as the Government urgently considered a package of measures designed to curb the spread of salmonella combined with help to the ailing poultry industry.

Mr John Macgregor, the Minister of Agriculture, was working late last night on the measures. An announcement could come today on a scheme to "buy in" surplus eggs.

After returning from Brussels yesterday he assessed the

state of the industry, spoke to colleagues and quickly concluded that further help was needed.

Mrs Currie is criticized, along with the Prime Minister, in a letter to The Times today by Mr John Biffen, the former Cabinet minister. He says the

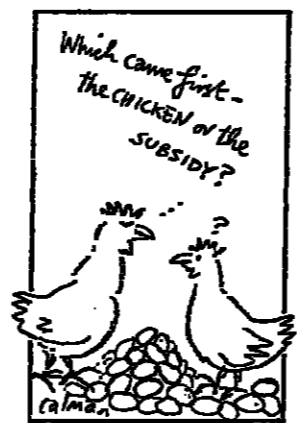
failure to apologize for the remarks "fosters the cancer of arrogance."

With a £500,000 advertising campaign being launched today to restore the battered confidence of the public in eggs, Mr Macgregor was working on measures to restore the balance of supply and demand in the egg market by controlling the current glut.

Mrs Margaret Thatcher told the Commons yesterday: "We are very aware of the deep problems faced by the egg industry."

As new measures were being examined it was estimated that 10,000 jobs are likely to be lost, and up to a quarter of the nation's stock of laying hens destroyed, as a result of the scare prompted by Mrs Currie's statement on television two weeks ago.

The prediction was made by Mr Keith Pulman, secretary of Continued on page 22, col 3



Drug makes cancer cells 'self-destruct'

By Pearce Wright, Science Editor

Successful experiments with a new cancer treatment, which makes malignant tumours "self-destruct", were reported in London yesterday to the Cancer Research Campaign.

The method depends on generating a cell-killing drug only within malignant tissues. The idea has been tested on human tumours in mice that are resistant to usual treatments, by a team working with Professor Kenneth Bagshaw, at the Charing Cross Hospital, London.

Trials on human volunteers

will begin at the end of next year. But the development opens the way for scientists to make the "magic bullet" approach to cancer treatment, through which tissues are targeted for therapy, more effective.

In a second development, at Cambridge, described in today's issue of the Lancet, scientists report their first successful treatment with the magic bullet approach for combating cancer in white blood cells.

Continued on page 22, col

Royal attendance at midnight Armenia concert

By Andrew Billen Arts Correspondent



James Galway: One of the artists taking part.

Buckingham Palace yesterday announced that the Prince and Princess of Wales are to attend tomorrow's Musicians for Armenia concert at the Barbican Hall.

The midnight concert features leading musicians, including André Mstislav Rostropovich and James Galway. It is being sponsored by The Times, and will be broadcast live on BBC 2 and Radio 3.

The news of the royal visit came on the day contributions to the appeal of British Association of Concert Artists topped £200,000.

All proceeds from the concert will go to the Red Cross for its work in the aftermath of the Armenian

earthquake. Mr David Sigall, chairman of the agents' association, said: "After five days of escalating activity and support this is the culmination and will ensure the status of the event. We are immensely grateful to Their Royal Highnesses for giving up their evening at such short notice."

The Prince is patron of the English Chamber Orchestra, which is playing Beethoven's Coriolan Overture at the concert. The princess is patron of the youth movement of the British Red Cross Society.

Andrei Gavrilov, the internationally acclaimed pianist, who is performing at the concert, spoke yesterday of his love for the people of Armenia, where his mother lives. He said he would visit the devastated region early next month.

Many of his relatives lived there, but none was hurt in the earthquake.

The concert begins at 11 pm and ends at 12.30 am. To help travellers at that time Berryburst Plc has donated two 50-seater coaches to take concert-goers from the Barbican to Trafalgar Square and Victoria. A special taxi service is also being organized.

The programme includes Beethoven's Coriolan, conducted by André Previn; James Galway playing Debussy's "Syrinx"; and Rostropovich, playing Villa Lobo's Bachianas Brasileiras No 1, and accompanying his wife, Galina Vishnevskaya, in songs by Tchaikovsky. Tickets are still available at £25, £15 and £10 (including donation) from the Barbican booking office (01 638 8891).

Armenia concerts, page 18

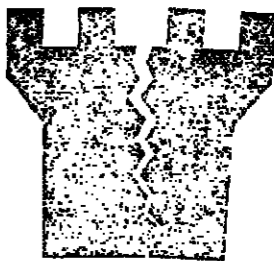
TOMORROW IN COLOUR

The props of war

Throughout the world, film and television companies are preparing for the anniversary next year of the Second World War.

Tomorrow The Times finds out who's shooting what - and where they get the uniforms, vehicles and firearms they need.

Plus...



"Impoverished aristocrats" should no longer receive government aid to maintain their "crumbling stately homes" but should sell them instead to the nouveaux riches, Nicholas Ridley suggested recently.

Tomorrow, in colour, The Times asks some aristocrats how they feel about Mr Ridley's suggestion.

In search of Santa: The Times scours Scandinavia for the real Father Christmas

On other pages: Bryan Appayard on Cyprus; Clive Davis on Nat King Cole; Jonathan Meades on restaurants; Jane MacQuitty on wine; Frances Bissell, The Times Cook; and Deyan Sudjic on the perfect cup of coffee.

WIN £52,000

Portfolio Accumulator

Yesterday's £4,000 daily prize was shared between two winners (see page 3). Today's Portfolio Accumulator stands at £52,000. Prices: page 27

We're giving away half our furniture for Christmas. The biggest ever Habitat Furniture Sale is now on. We're selling selected Cabinet Furniture, like tables, chairs, storage units, wardrobes, sideboards, etc., etc., etc. AT HALF PRICE. And all this is available with instant credit up to £1,000.* habitat

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NEWS ROUNDUP

TB in deer to be made notifiable

The Government intends to make tuberculosis in deer a notifiable disease and to introduce compulsory identification and movement records. The actions, announced yesterday, come after the first recorded case in Britain of a person catching the disease from an infected deer.

Miss Janice Gumbley, who works at Bury St Anstons Farm, Rudgwick, West Sussex, reacted positively when staff were tested last week after a tuberculosis outbreak among the 200 breeding hinds and 150 calves owned by Mr Carl Wheeler and Dr John Fletcher, president of the Veterinary Deer Society. Miss Gumbley has been put on an antibiotic course and there was every chance the disease would not spread to her lungs, Mr Wheeler said.

Six outbreaks among deer have been confirmed in Britain.

Union suspensions

The electricians' union last night suspended its London press branch whose 1,500 members are being asked to ballot on whether they should join Sogat, the main print union. The move, being led by Mr Sean Geraghty, the branch secretary, represents one of the most serious membership challenges to the Electrical, Electronic, Telecommunication and Plumbing Union since its expulsion earlier this year from the TUC in the row over single union no-strike deals.

Police recruits plea

Greater Manchester Police Authority and Chief Constable James Anderson hope to meet Mr Douglas Hurd, Home Secretary, next month to try to persuade him of the urgent need to recruit 700 officers to the force within the next five years. Lawlessness on streets patrolled by too few officers constantly under risk of attack and unable to summon emergency help was the alternative, Mr Stephen Murphy, the police authority chairman, said.

Equal pay defeat

A school nursery nurse lost her legal battle yesterday for the same rate of pay as men on higher local authority pay scales. Five law lords unanimously dismissed a claim for "equal value pay" by Mrs Marion Leverton, who works for Cwylod County Council at Goffyn Infants' School in Connah's Quay, Cwylod, on the ground that the difference between her pay and that of the men she chose for comparison resulted not from sex discrimination, but because she worked shorter hours and had longer holidays than the men.

Crackdown on litter

Lord Cairness, Minister of State for the Environment, disclosed his strategy yesterday for cleaning up Britain. Increased penalties for dropping litter are under consideration together with a £3 million grant to the Tidy British group. That doubles its government funding, enabling it to complete the 16 pilot studies launched last March by Mrs Margaret Thatcher to find the best way to clear an area and then keep it clean. Lord Cairness said local pollution, such as litter, needed to be taken as seriously as the global issues of the ozone layer and acid rain.

£491,993 damages

A woman aged 21 who was paralysed from the neck down after a riding accident in 1983 won £491,993 damages in the High Court yesterday. Sharon Barfoot, of Leckhamstead Wharf House, near Buckingham, sued Alan and Jane Robertson, stable owners, after the accident at Springfield Stables, Oakham, Leicestershire. She claimed she was jumping a mare with spurs on their instructions. They admitted liability but contested the damages. Included in the award was money for a pony and trap adapted to take her wheelchair.

QC to head inquiry into Clapham rail disaster

By Richard Ford, Paul Valley and Frances Gibb

The Government has appointed a crown court recorder to head the public inquiry into the rail disaster at Clapham that killed 33 people.

Mr Anthony Hidden, QC, aged 52, is expected to hold an initial hearing into the worst British Rail crash in 20 years early next month.

Mr Paul Channon, Secretary of State for Transport, said the investigation would be carried out under section seven of the Regulation of Railways Act, 1871 — as was the King's Cross disaster inquiry.

Mr Channon said the inquiry would consider the cause of the accident and all other relevant matters.

But there are calls for Mr Hidden to have a much wider brief. Last

night Mr John Prescott, the Shadow transport secretary, said that the terms of reference of the inquiry were unacceptable.

In a letter to the Prime Minister, he demanded that she publicly state that passenger safety, staffing levels and morale, overcrowding and funding would be considered.

Dr Stuart Cole, a rail academic, said: "The inquiry must look at the relationship between finance and safety — between the reduction of subsidy to British Rail's south-eastern network and the nature of the cost-cutting exercises which are currently being implemented."

The Government is reducing subsidy to the commuter rail network from levels of £280 million in

1985-86 to £80 million by 1993. By 1997 the subsidy will be abolished.

"The options BR faces are to cut costs, put up fares, or both. There will be some fare increases but the kind of rises needed to cope with such rapid cuts in subsidy would be of a level which would produce anger from the Tory voters of the South-east."

"Cutting costs has been the only option", Dr Cole, principal lecturer in transport economics at the Business School of North London Polytechnic, said.

"The Fennell Report rather restricted itself to operations within London Transport. This inquiry must be wider."

Mr Hidden pledged that the

inquiry "will do its very best to ensure that there is no repetition of this appalling tragedy."

"The risks of such a repetition (which perhaps can never be totally eliminated) must be reduced to the lowest level humanly possible."

Mr Hidden, leader of the South Eastern circuit, visited the scene of the accident for half an hour on Wednesday. He said next month's opening would make decisions as to representation and give directions as to future hearings.

Mr Hidden, one of the most senior members of the Bar Council, also expressed his personal sympathy to "the families and friends bereaved by this tragic and untimely accident and to all those who have suffered injuries or have had to undergo the experience of being

involved in the accident." The flowers that had been placed on the railings "were a reminder of the waste of life and the injuries, both physical and mental, which will be the consequences of the accident", he added.

Mr Hidden is at the top of his profession where he has a mixed general common law, commercial and criminal practice. He also undertakes revenue fraud, medical negligence, Privy Council and professional disciplinary work.

He took silk in 1976, after he was standing counsel to the Inland Revenue, prosecuting tax frauds, for several years.

He is married with two sons and a daughter and lists his recreations as playing bad golf, reading and watching football.

£30,000 'job bias' fines for Ulster

By Richard Ford Political Correspondent

Employers flouting job discrimination laws in Northern Ireland will face fines of up to £30,000 under measures to promote fair employment between Protestants and Roman Catholics.

A Bill was unveiled yesterday with a glossy brochure giving key details and containing a fulsome endorsement from the Prime Minister.

In a preface, clearly aimed at opinion in the United States where a strong campaign against British employment laws is running, Mrs Margaret Thatcher says the Government had promised it would take whatever steps were necessary to ensure equality.

All public and private sector employers with 10 employees or more will register with a Fair Employment Commission which has powers to investigate employment practices and issue instructions. They must monitor the composition of their workforce, submitting annual returns and review employment practices every three years. Private sector firms with more than 250 workers must monitor applications.

Failure to provide annual monitoring returns will be a criminal offence. Employers breaching statutory obligations will be unable to get government grants or tender for public sector projects.

Training shake-up to cure specialist nurses shortage

By Jill Sherman, Social Services Correspondent

The Government yesterday signalled a reorganization of training for specialist nurses to alleviate critical shortages in high technology nursing.

Mr Kenneth Clarke, Secretary of State for Health, yesterday suggested nurses could take "step by step" modular courses with more emphasis on videos. They could build up credits for specific qualifications after taking a series of short courses instead.

The announcement came as Mr Clarke disclosed preliminary results of a survey which showed fewer than 18 per cent of qualified nurses working in specialist wards have extra qualifications.

The shortage of paediatric intensive care nurses, highlighted in Birmingham last November with the David Barber hole-in-the-heart case, prompted the study which covered nurses in accident and emergency departments, operating departments, renal units, coronary care, paediatric intensive care units and neonatal units.

The survey of 38,305 nursing staff found only 4,840 out of 27,000 qualified staff in high technology specialties had a post registration qualification. That compared with 20,000 clinical certificates issued by the English National Board, responsible for nurse training, over the past 10



Mr Kenneth Clarke with Miss Linda Davidson, editor of *Nursing Times*, yesterday.

years. Many nurses take qualifications for promotion. Others may have left nursing or gone to the private sector.

Mr Clarke told a conference on nurse recruitment and retention organized by *Nursing Times* that the survey found many felt courses were too long, too dear and produced

"overtrained nurses". The Government is funding the English National Board over an in-depth study of training needs.

Project to eradicate salmonella to be ended

By Ruth Gledhill

A project to find a method for the poultry industry to get rid of salmonella will end in March — before its final results are known — after the withdrawal of a research grant by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Three scientists at the Institute of Food Research at Bristol, who are said to be on the brink of the discovery, will lose their jobs and the project will end before the completion of field studies.

These already have succeeded in keeping salmonella from 20 flocks out of 22 in trials to date.

The project is based on the theory that the spread of salmonella results from intensive farming methods which mean chicks never have the chance to have salmonella-resistant bacteria passed on to them by their mothers.

Dr Geoff Mead, head of the hygiene section at the institute, said: "Chicks go into the boilerhouse with a very, very small amount of gut bacteria. They start to eat food which is often contaminated with salmonella. It is easy for the bacteria to spread and it just romps away."

Under normal conditions, the hen would pass on gut bacteria to her chicks which would drive out the salmonella.

Dr Mead said the aim was for egg producers to introduce the bacteria into their chicks

ENERGY BLUEPRINT

HELPING BUSINESS MAKE MORE OF ITS ENERGY

A cook-chill cure for catering

Electricity is the key to the system that is saving hospitals, hotels and restaurants thousands of pounds a year in more efficient catering — Cook-Chill.

With Cook-Chill, food is prepared normally at a central location but last-chilled within 90 minutes and stored at just above freezing point (0-3°C) until it is needed. It's then re-heated in finishing kitchens needing low capital investment and minimum staff.

Derriford Hospital, Plymouth, is among the many organisations benefiting from Cook-Chill.

The hospital is believed to have the largest directly managed Cook-Chill operation in Northern Europe, preparing 6,500 meals a day for distribution to the 23 hospitals that form the Plymouth

Health Authority. All food is prepared during the Monday-Friday working week. Two refrigerated vehicles deliver it in multi-portion packs to hospitals throughout East Cornwall, South Hams and the city itself.

The Cook-Chill concept was introduced at Derriford in 1985 when the kitchen was due to be refurbished and equipment updated.

Staff from the Electricity Council and South Western Electricity Board were involved from the start, providing advice on space requirements, cooling equipment, chilling and other refrigeration needs and food regeneration equipment.

It's another example of how electricity can mean a healthy return on your investment.



For more information tick coupon box 1.



Dental comfort

If the dentist's drill is no delight, a warm surgery can at least lessen the discomfort.

Shrewsbury dentist Paul Byrne-Price found the answer to patients' needs with electric storage heating.

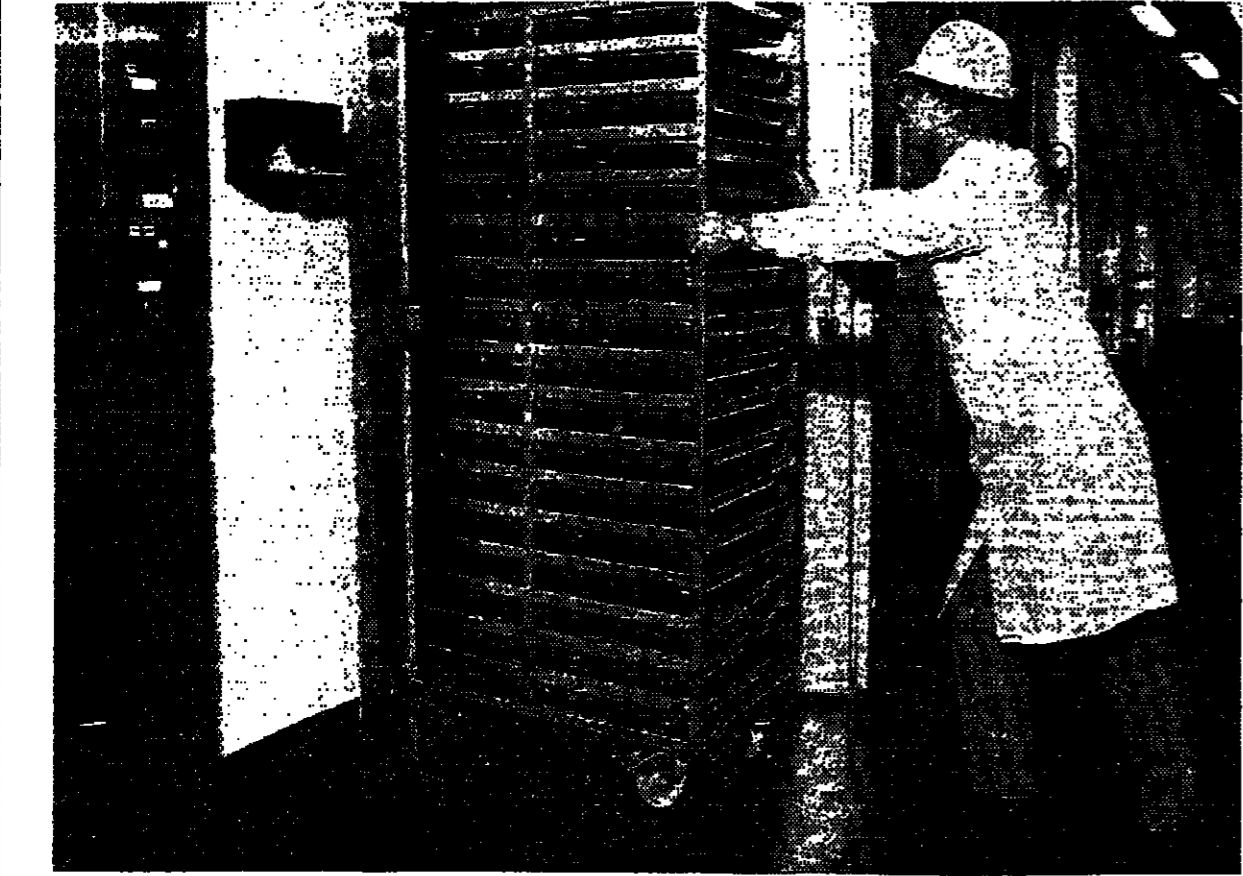
"It helps me to be able to start treatment knowing they are relaxed and comfortable," he said.

The problem before was that in winter the surgery was often cold, with condensation on the windows, and the heating system expensive to run.

Looking for an economical, controllable alternative, Mr Byrne-Price contacted Midlands Electricity for advice. The solution was an electric storage heating system with room temperatures set by automatic controls. Running costs were kept low by opting for night-rate electricity and upgrading roof-space insulation.

In the surgery and waiting room, the heaters incorporate automatic input controls which determine the level of charge taken overnight. Daytime room temperatures can be adjusted by using a further control on each heater.

For more information tick coupon box 3.



Underfloor benefits

Compact disc manufacturers Nimbus Records Ltd, of Monmouth, Gwent, make use of waste heat to warm their office space and achieve substantial savings.

The company converted a stable block for office use and the building was insulated to high standards and fitted with underfloor heating using plastic water pipes.

Heat is recovered from manufacturing processes in the adjacent high-tech block by means of a water-cooled condenser on the water chilling plant, which has replaced the conventional factory cooling tower. Hot water is circulated through the underfloor pipes by a small electric pump. Automatic controls ensure that temperatures are maintained accurately.

The pumps and extra pipework cost £7,700 to install. Pollution-free and requiring minimum attention, the system saves £2,100 a year in operating costs and

earned the company the 1987 BETA trophy for energy efficiency in buildings under 1,000 square feet.

For more information tick coupon box 2.

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Former champion trainer jailed for cruelty to horse

By Kerry Gill

Harry Bell, the former champion Scottish racehorse trainer, was jailed for six months yesterday after being convicted last month of cruelty to a horse. It was his third conviction in four years.

Jedburgh Sheriff Court was told of the chain of events caused by Bell that eventually led to an unbroken filly attempting to commit suicide by hitting her head against a Land-Rover.

Bell, aged 60, of Middlefield, Hawick, Borders, was found guilty on November 24 of causing the filly unnecessary suffering by towing the horse behind the Land-Rover at speed and causing the horse to fall.

It was said he had also struck the filly repeatedly with a stick during the incident, which took place at his farm on July 15.

A representative of the Jockey Club was at the trial and a report is to be sent to the club stewards.

Sheriff James Paterson had said he had been impressed by the evidence of Miss Nadia Dallapiazza, aged 16, and Miss Josephine Ross, aged 17, both stable girls from Edinburgh, who joined the stables on the day of the incident.

Miss Dallapiazza said when giving evidence at Bell's trial: "It was getting beaten around the head. Its head was swollen and so were its legs. It got to the stage where it just couldn't

take any more and it was trying to kill itself. It threw its head in the direction of the Land-Rover." After witnessing Bell's cruelty, both immediately packed their bags and returned home, the sheriff said.

Two days later inspectors from the Scottish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals went to inspect the filly, but were told that the horse had been put down because she had thrown a rider.

Sheriff Paterson said the only inference he could draw from the fact that the horse had disappeared was a "sister one".

"If the horse had been examined it would have supported the evidence that it had been cruelly treated", he said at Bell's trial.

Yesterday, Sheriff Paterson said the seven-month ban on Bell holding a National Hunt training licence as a result of the case, but he retained his licence, but he was fined with riding.

Mr Edward Targowski, for the defence, said that his client would probably lose the lease on his farm if he was sent to prison.

An appeal is to be lodged on Bell's behalf, but an application for interim liberation was refused by the sheriff.

Last night Sir Cameron Rusby, chief executive of the society, said that while he welcomed a custodial sen-

tence, he was "amazed" that Bell had not been banned from having anything to do with horses ever again. "It is the worst case of cruelty involving a horse I have known in my time as chief executive here", he said.

For a quarter of a century Bell built up his stables in the Borders, attracting fame and gaining a steady stream of winners including three victories in the Scottish Grand National.

However, by 1984, it emerged that Bell's methods fell far short of the acceptable. An inspector from the SSPCA noticed a mare stumbling in a field. It appeared weak and thin and, later, Bell was fined £500 for failing to provide proper veterinary care. The mare, La Gavina, was put down.

The Jockey Club handed out a seven-month ban on Bell holding a National Hunt training licence as a result of the case, but he retained his licence, but he was fined with riding.

Instead, his daughter applied for a licence, but it was not the end of controversy for Bell.

He was fined £100 for breach of the peace after threatening a vet and, in 1985, admitted causing unnecessary suffering to two heifers by having their legs bound together too tightly over too long a period.

Guard wounded in bungled robbery



An armed policeman on a rooftop watching a flat near East India Dock Road, east London, after the raid yesterday.

By Mark Souster and Patrick O'Hanlon

Two men were arrested yesterday after a security guard was wounded in a bungled £75,000 armed robbery in the East End of London.

The guard, from Security Express, was shot in the thigh and ankle as he delivered money to Barclays Bank in East India Dock Road, Poplar, at about 11.10am.

He was shot after he refused to hand over several cash bags. Last night he was in a comfortable condition in the London Hospital.

The robbers fled through a shopping arcade, chased by the wounded guard's colleague, another Securitor driver and the public.

Armed officers from Limehouse division and the PT17 unit surrounded a flat in nearby Ricardo Street. Two men were subsequently arrested; one attempting to leave the premises and the other inside later. Police fired no shots.

Chief Supt Richard Franklin, commander of Limehouse division, said at least three shots had been fired from a handgun, believed to be either a .22 or .38 pistol.

A starting pistol and money were recovered from the flat, he added. Police are still looking for the handgun used in the robbery, and want to trace a third man seen running from the scene towards a tower block.

It is believed that £60,000 and £15,000 in traveller's cheques were stolen.

Mr Franklin said: "The guard was told to hand over the cash. He didn't do so



Police lead away a man after they had surrounded the flat in Ricardo Street.

straightaway so the shooting started. A shot was fired into the air, then the guard was shot in the ankle then the thigh."

The wounded guard was tended by Mr Vince Proto, a fireman based at Poplar station opposite the bank.

Mr Proto said: "I was in the training room overlooking the scene, heard several shots and saw the guard on the ground."

"I grabbed a first aid kit and went to help the man who was in his twenties and bleeding from his leg. I bandaged him up."

A private ambulance which was passing the bank took the guard to hospital.

Leading Firemen Dave Smith and Brian Dolan chased the men but they disappeared into the warren of buildings behind the bank.

Mrs Debbie Jones, aged 25, was in a cafe near the bank when the shooting started. "I looked up, saw the guard go down and two fellas running. One had a gun, the other was carrying money bags."

"They were being followed by people who I think were firemen. One went under Fitzwilliam House, (a 20-storey tower block near the scene) and the other went into Kerby Street. At one stage he dropped one of the bags, stopped, and went back for it."

"That gave one of the blokes chasing time to catch up. But the robber threatened him, I don't know if it was with a gun, and the other guy

put his hands up and backed off."

More than 300 children, teachers and staff in two infants' schools took cover after a seven-year-old boy spotted one of the robbers running across the playground wielding a gun.

The west London gun battle which left two detectives and three armed robbers wounded was not a planned police ambush but an armed surveillance operation, according to Scotland Yard sources yesterday.

Two undercover detectives were outgunned but challenged the robbers as they fled from the post office when the alarm was raised. Scotland Yard is preparing to hold an inquiry into the shooting.

Assault on girl friend 'caused by steroid'

By Mark Ellis

A man accused of trying to murder his girl friend walked free from court yesterday after a judge ruled that he was not responsible for his actions because of drugs he was taking after cosmetic surgery.

The judge directed the jury to acquit Mr Steven Haines, aged 27, a mechanic, on the third day of his trial at Reading Crown Court.

Mr Justice French said: "This is a remarkable case, unparalleled in my experience and in my reading of the law."

Mr Haines was alleged to have tried to kill Miss Siobhan Hobbs, aged 24, his girl friend, earlier this year in the home they shared in Twyford, Berkshire, after she found him bashing his head against a wall.

When she questioned his behaviour, he attacked her with a variety of weapons including a knife and a broken bottle and threw a microwave oven at her, the court heard.

Mr Haines began acting in a "bizarre way" after cosmetic surgery to correct a jaw defect. He was prescribed drugs including antibiotics, anti-depressants and Dexamethasone, a steroid which, the court was told, in about five per cent of cases could bring on a mild form psychosis.

The trial was halted after Dr Paul Dorban, a forensic psychiatrist, told the jury: "At the time of the offence the defendant was suffering from a rare psychosis which dramatically altered his normal capacity for control."

He said the psychosis was brought on by the administration of Dexamethasone.

Dr Dorban said both before and after the attack Mr Haines was "well-adjusted" and since the attack he had lived "an entirely normal life". The couple had planned to marry next year, but the relationship ended on the day of the attack.

Portfolio PLUS NEW Accumulator

There were two winners of yesterday's £4,000 Portfolio prize.

Mr David Grose, an hotelier, of Thurlstone, Kingsbridge, Devon, will use his share to clear an overdraft.

Mr Douglas Durie, a retired farmer, of Camp Green Farm, Debenham, Suffolk, plans to visit Kenya.

Kaufman and BBC pay for libel £175,000 damages for police

Mr Gerald Kaufman, the shadow Foreign Secretary, and the BBC paid £175,000 libel damages in the High Court yesterday to 16 police officers linked to the beating of five schoolboys.

The officers were investigated after five innocent youths were assaulted by police from a transit van in Holloway, north London, in August 1983.

Their counsel, Mr Patrick Moloney, told Mr Justice Michael Davies, that none of the 16 was involved in the assault or subsequent cover-up by the guilty officers who were jailed last year.

They were, however, on patrol in north London in two similar vans that night and were the subject of investigation into the assault.

Mr Kaufman, who was

shadow Home Secretary at the time, called on the BBC London Plus programme for the dismissal of officers from all three vans, guilty and innocent alike.

Mr Moloney said the natural conclusion for any viewer was that some of the 16 had been involved and that was a serious libel.

Mr Kaufman and the BBC accept that none was involved in the assault or cover-up. They withdrew the allegations, agreed to pay damages and costs.

Mr Robin Cooper, Mr Kaufman's solicitor, said his client was understandably under the misapprehension that the conspiracy of silence about the assault had extended a great deal further than turns out to have been the case. He had no intention of attacking inno-

cent police officers and was glad to apologise to them.

Mr Desmond Browne, for the BBC, also apologised and said it had no intention of attacking the 16 whose innocence it fully accepted.

In June, 11 of the 16 won £160,000 libel damages from the Evening Standard.

Outside the court, Chief Inspector Ian Russell, one of the 16 backed by the Police Federation, said it was irresponsible of Mr Kaufman to "vilify me in public without a shred of evidence."

All had suffered personally from the strain of having the allegations hanging over them. He described the assault as "most shameful" and added: "My colleagues and I abhor the behaviour of those police officers who committed the assaults."

Seven held after dawn drug raids

By Stewart Tendler Crime Reporter

Scotland Yard detectives were questioning six men and a woman last night after a two-year international investigation into a multi-million pound cannabis network linked to organised crime in Britain and the United States.

Drugs were allegedly smuggled into Britain from a boat off Devon. Police swooped as they believe the gang was planning to ship 20 tons of the drug worth £20 million.

Two small freighters costing about £70,000 each were bought to move the cargo from North Africa.

The London gang is suspected of connections with the Mafia on both coasts of America. Detectives believe the network is linked to a huge cannabis smuggling operation halted by British and American investigators.

The Yard's organised crime task force under Det Chief Supt Brian Boyce carried out dawn raids on nine London addresses yesterday.

The task force has co-operated closely with the Federal German police, the BKA, the Garda Siochana in the Irish Republic, the Drug Enforcement Agency in the United States and Customs, Police in The Netherlands, Portugal and Spain also took part in the investigation.

Delays 'will worsen' Airline users see safety risk

By Harvey Elliott, Air Correspondent

An airline passengers consumer group yesterday criticized the Government, the Civil Aviation Authority and the BAA for their "complacent and dismissive" attitude to the crisis of congestion at Britain's airports.

It demanded immediate action to provide more runways and airport terminals in the South-east.

The Air Transport Users Committee, set up by the CAA to lobby on behalf of airline users, said in its annual report that passengers were "heartily fed up" with delays and painted a gloomy picture of continuing delays next summer.

Too little had been done to ease the problem and officials had still not "grasped the nettle" of providing more capacity to meet the surge in demand for air travel, it said.

"We are fed up with at-

tempts by the Civil Aviation Authority, the Government, airlines and airport operators to blame each other instead of seeking to resolve problems that are gradually getting worse", Mr John Cox, chairman of the committee, said.

"We are also concerned that as the pressure on an inadequate infrastructure increases the margins built into the system for safety purposes risk being eroded."

The group was particularly scathing in its criticism of BAA, formerly the British Airports Authority, which, it claimed, was "virtually alone" in believing that no additional runway would be needed in the South-east until the year 2000.

The group instead maintains that a new runway is needed urgently to give a degree of flexibility so that future demand can be met. It

wants to see a "commuter" runway developed at Heathrow and an increase in night flights.

"The building of a fourth major airport to serve London is surely unthinkable", the report says.

Mr Cox said that his committee did not know where a new runway could be built, because the Government had boxed itself into a corner by decisions which limited development at Gatwick, Heathrow and Stansted.

His group urged Mr Paul Channon, Secretary of State for Transport, to set up an urgent technical feasibility study to see to what extent a cross runway at Heathrow could be developed for use by smaller aircraft and the emergency runway at Gatwick used more effectively.

It also sought a greater use of quiet aircraft at night.

Red flu cases sweep Britain

An influenza outbreak is sweeping Britain with the number of cases reported by GPs doubling twice within the last fortnight.

However the Department of Health emphasized last night that the strain of flu - known as Taiwan or Red flu - was no more virulent than other

strains. It mainly affected people under 20 and would not cause serious illness in babies.

Sir Donald Acheson, Chief Medical Officer, said last night that children over four and teenagers suffering from chronic pulmonary disease, heart, renal or lung disease or

diabetes should ask their GP about vaccination.

The Royal College of General Practitioners says there are 28 cases of Taiwan flu per 100,000 people. An epidemic is classified as 100 per 100,000 people. In the flu epidemic of 1969-70 the rate of those infected reached 918.

Top executives who are worlds apart

By Tim Jones Employment Affairs Correspondent

Britain's executives believe Northerners are friendly, careful with money, down to earth, loyal to employers and have a sense of humour, while Southerners are ambitious, entrepreneurial, under stress, spoilt and wealthy.

Those are some of the findings of a survey published today by MORI which demonstrates that in the executive mind the North/South divide is a fact of life.

On such key factors as schools, cost of living and education, people in the North clearly feel they are better off. Northerners are happier with their travel to work, cost of living, housing and shops. Southerners are more satisfied with their work and job availability but less so with their lifestyle. The survey, for Hoggatt

Bowers, an executive recruitment consultancy, shows while 14 per cent of Southern executives would not consider a move North, 37 per cent of Northerners are unwilling to contemplate a move South.

A total of 201 executives, half personnel directors, from companies in London, Leeds and Manchester took part in the survey which shows that an emphatic 78 per cent of Northern executives consider Southerners wealthy, and 71 per cent of their Southern counterparts agree.

Within both groups, the survey shows more than 85 per cent agreement that job security, interesting work, salary levels, benefits, the opportunity to show initiative and career prospects are all important in their jobs.

Northern executives, however, tend to

be less satisfied with their employment, particularly the benefits package, career prospects and salary levels.

Although personnel directors said they aim to get the best person for the job, 24 per cent in the North prefer to employ executives from their own area compared with only 16 per cent in the South.

A quarter of northern personnel directors feel their location is a disadvantage for recruitment while only half that number of southern personnel directors regard the South as a disadvantage.

Only one executive in three would consider moving to another European country, although two-fifths claimed to speak a foreign language well enough to do business. Three-quarters of senior personnel directors, the survey shows, do not know which skills will be scarce after 1992.

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House-seller should make search inquiries, report says

By Frances Gibb, Legal Affairs Correspondent

Measures to speed up house-buying such as putting the onus of carrying out search inquiries on to the vendor are called for by the Law Commission in a report published yesterday.

It says such a move — which has been suggested by the Law Society — would cut delays in house-buying which at present can run to several weeks. The vendor would then pass the answers to the buyer.

The commission, the law reform body, also calls for a statutory time limit of ten working days to be imposed on councils when replying to "local search" inquiries concerning planning and other routine matters.

Where local authorities fail to reply within the time limit, owners would be entitled to proceed without replies and

local authorities would have to compensate them if they suffered any loss as a result, the commission says.

The commission suggests a phased four-point plan to cut delays and bring a "significant improvement" in the service offered by some councils.

It says sellers should put in inquiries and pass the replies on to buyers, eliminating initial delay; a short form of inquiries comprising four instead of 18 questions should be introduced for most properties by next June, reducing local authorities' workload; records should be computerized where appropriate; and legislation should require councils to reply within the time limit and compensate losers.

Legislation should be prepared at the earliest opportunity, the commission says. When parliamentary time is available, if no improvements have been achieved as a result of the proposals, "statutory interven-

tion may seem irresistible". Professor Julian Farrand, chairman of the conveyancing committee, said: "The early steps in conveyancing urgently need speeding up."

"We have to cut down the period of uncertainty before exchange of contracts which property owners and buyers suffer at present and which encourages gazumping and gazundering."

"A handful of local authorities are guilty of major delays which can cause real hardship."

"We are putting forward a practical reform programme which can be started at once without legislation."

Although the Association of Metropolitan Authorities said they were encouraging members to keep within the 10-day target in processing inquiries, a "not insignificant number of authorities consistently exceed this target time and measures beyond mere exhortation appear necessary", the com-

mission says. Inquiries relating to planning, road maintenance and compulsory acquisition are submitted to local authorities as a matter of routine in almost all conveyancing transactions. A minimum fee of £11.30 is charged.

Local Authority Enquiries: Defeating Delays. Recommendations of the Conveyancing Standing Committee of the Law Commission. 37-38 John Street, Theobalds Road, London WC1N 2BQ.

● The 4,700 houses and flats owned by Conservative-controlled Chiltern District Council have been transferred out of municipal ownership in one of the biggest examples to date of the government's policy of gradually abolishing council housing, (David Walker writes).

The properties were bought by a non-profit-making housing association which has pledged to peg rents to the level of inflation for at least three years. The

£33 million deal, was approved by Chiltern tenants in a vote, and earlier this week the Government gave its blessing.

Mr Ron Kibble, council's chief housing officer, of the Amersham-based council, has resigned in order to take over as chief executive of the new landlords, the Chiltern Hundreds Housing Association.

Until the new Housing Act comes into force next year, councils — mainly Conservative — have been selling property voluntarily, in most cases to non-profit-making housing associations. Among those awaiting government approval are Sevenoaks, Kent and Torbay, Devon.

However, Mr Nicholas Ridley, Secretary of State for the Environment, has delayed the Torbay decision after only 15 per cent of eligible tenants approved the sale plan. The Sevenoaks transfer appears more likely to be given the go-ahead after 85 per cent of tenants voted in favour.

More court hearings may be 'secret'

By Our Legal Affairs Correspondent

Certain hearings which are held in open court in the Chancery division of the High Court may be held in camera if proposals before the Judges' Council are approved.

A committee of 18 judges and lawyers suggests changes in procedure which affect expert hearings where only one side is represented.

Many matters of public interest start in the Chancery division, where litigants may choose to go so it is heard in public.

They include applications for injunctions, such as by employers against trade unions, over company matters (such as to stop the transfer of shares), over partnerships, wills, and land.

The proposal would bring Chancery division procedure into line with that in the Queen's Bench division, where hundreds of such applications every week are heard in private, although in chambers where solicitors can appear rather than in camera, where they cannot.

But it will upset newspaper editors and some lawyers who have been lobbying for practice to be rationalized so more hearings are in open court.

The Guild of British Newspaper Editors said all preliminary proceedings — whether both sides are there or not — should be in open court.

In another proposal, the committee wants to bring a second class of case — preliminary hearings in the Queen's Bench division where both sides are present — out of chambers and into open court.

The changes, aimed at streamlining procedures in the High Court divisions, would leave in chambers Queen's Bench applications where only one side is represented.

The proposals are being opposed by the Law Society. But Mr Robert Johnson QC, Bar chairman, welcomed the decision to hold hearings in open court where both parties were represented.

Father Ryan affair

UK 'could win legal challenge in Dublin'

By Jamie Dettmer, Irish Affairs Correspondent

A legal challenge to the decision by Mr John Murray, the Irish Attorney General, not to extradite Father Patrick Ryan, the alleged IRA terrorist, could be mounted in the Dublin High Court, according to experts in Irish constitutional law.

Senior counsel in Dublin believe the British Government would have the legal standing to mount an action and to seek a High Court ruling overturning Mr Murray's decision.

They expressed surprise that the British Attorney General, Sir Patrick Mayhew, has so far shown no interest in exploring this legal route as they believe there would be a reasonable chance of success. They argue that Mr Murray was wrong to reject the British extradition request because he doubted whether Father Ryan would receive a fair trial in Britain.

"He should not have embarked on a course of his own and attempted to determine whether a British jury would have given Ryan a fair trial", a

senior constitutional lawyer said. He "acted in a judicial role instead of acting within the extradition legislation as an attorney general."

The British Government could ask the Dublin High Court to quash Mr Murray's decision, the lawyer said. The growing belief in Dublin legal circles that the decision could be challenged follows the article in *The Times* yesterday by Mr John Kelly, a former Irish attorney general, who said Mr Murray had "exceeded his legal powers".

According to the 1987 Extradition (Amendment) Act, Mr Murray is empowered to accept or reject an extradition warrant on two grounds. He has to decide whether there is "sufficiency of evidence" against a wanted man and he has to satisfy himself that Britain will prosecute a suspect on the original charges listed in a warrant.

In the Ryan case, Mr Murray was satisfied on both counts. In his 16-page statement justifying his decision to decline the British request he

said: "There is, on the part of the relevant prosecuting authority, a clear intention to prosecute and such intention is founded on the existence of sufficient evidence."

Fine Gael politicians have expressed concern at Mr Murray's decision. Mr Alan Dukes, Fine Gael leader, said that he the Irish attorney general "may have gone beyond his functions in this matter".

Mr Charles Haughey, Irish Prime Minister, dismissed the allegation, saying that the Irish attorney general is "a quasi-judicial person and forensic defender of the people and the best suited to defend the constitutional rights of Irish citizens".

Irish legal experts argue that the rights of Irish citizens are defended by the Supreme Court, not by the attorney general.

The Irish government has made it clear that it will accept British demands for the abolition of the Irish attorney general's role in extradition requests.

Luce launches sculpture gallery



BARRY GREENWOOD

Mr Richard Luce, Minister for the Arts, turns his attention to exhibits in the sculpture gallery at the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, which he officially opened yesterday. The gallery, to be a centre for late 18th and 19th century sculpture, includes marbles and bronzes from the Luce Blundell Collection, and works by Giovanni Fontana, and John Gibson and his circle.

Crash woman four times over limit

A mother was more than four times the legal drink-drive limit when she got behind the wheel with four children huddling in fear on the back seat of her car, an inquest in Norwich was told yesterday.

The children, four girls all aged below 11, were so terrified they had begged Mrs Caroline Foster, aged 37, not to drive because they knew she was drunk.

Within a mile of setting off,

the car crashed, killing Mrs Foster, of Hill Farm Road, Halesworth, Suffolk.

Mr James Hipwell, the coroner, heard how Mrs Foster had been drinking for five hours before the crash in October.

She had been to a horse sale with her daughters Susan, aged five, Natalie, aged seven, Her friend, Mrs Sheila Burrows, as well as her daughter Jodi, aged nine, and Zoe

Evenden, aged 11, went with her. Zoe said in a statement the women had been to a public house at the horse sale for three hours and at The Dove in Poringland, near Norwich, for a further two.

"Caroline could not walk in a straight line and I was frightened we might have an accident", she said. "We did not want Caroline to drive".

A verdict of accidental death was recorded.

Curators condemn museum sale plan

By Simon Tait

The Museums Association, the curators' professional society, has condemned as a "fundamental error" the Government's plans to give national museums more powers to dispose of their collections.

It says Treasury claims that funding is already adequate are absurd. The association calls for a reform of funding

policy for museums and the national heritage.

The association is responding to a consultation document from the Minister for the Arts that proposes to give powers to the National Gallery, the Tate and the National Portrait Gallery to sell items.

Curators have disclosed their views earlier than intended in the light of the Commons Public Accounts Committee's reiteration this week of the recommendation that museums should consider disposing of items.

"The association believes passionately that a decision to adopt the proposals would be a fundamental error with grave consequences for the heritage of this country", it says in its submission, not due until the end of the year.

"We see no benefit in forcing new powers on highly

respected independent boards of trustees who have made it clear that they do not want them."

The minister's proposals are seen by the association as a signal of national policy to all museums that they should capitalize on their collections.

"We cannot believe that it is the Government's intention to encourage such action. It does not accord with its declared policy to safeguard the heritage."

The Public Accounts Committee had condemned national museums over their care of collections, and Dr Patrick Boylan, association president, responded last night by saying:

"The disposal of collections is no solution to the museum funding crisis and the problem is getting worse, not better, due to the long-term continuing lack of adequate invest-

ment in the care of the nation's collections.

"A substantial injection of new cash and a fundamental rethinking of government funding priorities is now essential."

"The Treasury's claim that adequate funds are available within the existing arts budget is frankly absurd."

The MPs had said that museums had to consider disposing of items and that there was "no escape from the view that an inexorable rise in the size of the collections places serious demands on limited public funds."

A spokesman for Mr Richard Luce, the minister, who was in Liverpool opening a sculpture display at the Walker Art Gallery, would make no comment until all submissions had been made at the end of December.

Brothers are jailed for iron bar death

Two brothers were jailed in Belfast yesterday for the manslaughter of a teenager they attacked with iron bars after their car was vandalized.

William James Kelly, aged 21, and his brother Patrick, aged 18, had earlier been acquitted, on the judge's direction, of murdering Thomas McPharland, aged 19, in Andersonstown. Both admitted his manslaughter.

William Kelly was jailed for seven years and his younger brother for four. The brothers received concurrent three and two-year sentences respectively for causing grievous bodily harm to a second man.

A third Kelly brother, Sean, aged 20, and Francis Halligan, a neighbour, were given non-custodial sentences for attacking that man.

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BRITISH MIDLAND

£90m for reforms in schools

By Douglas Broom, Education Reporter

More than £90 million is to be spent next year to smooth the introduction of two of the Government's key education reforms, Mr Kenneth Baker, Secretary of State for Education and Science, announced yesterday.

He told the Commons that the 96 English education authorities would share £125.5 million in Education Support Grant from next April — the highest level ever.

Of the total, £29 million will be spent on introducing the new national curriculum for all state schools, including £9.5 million for information technology equipment, and £14.5 million on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

The sum also includes £35 million to cover the costs of introducing the new system of self-management of schools.

A further £25 million, to be spent on areas ranging from primary school science to improving local authority school inspection services, will bring the total devoted to implementing the Education Reform Act to more than £90 million.

For the inner cities, the £125.5 million programme includes £2.4 million for the provision of youth leaders in deprived areas, £3 million for establishing adult literacy centres and £1.5 million for improvement of adult education facilities.

The Education Support Grant, introduced in 1985, enables the Government to provide direct funding to support particular projects in addition to block grant paid to local authorities.



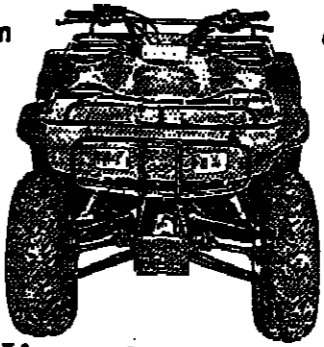
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MPs attack crisis in information technology staffing

By Martin Fletcher, Political Reporter

A committee of MPs yesterday condemned the Government's "complacency" towards Britain's rapidly widening trade balance in information technology and towards promoting the British information technology industry.

The Conservative-controlled Trade and Industry Committee lamented the lack of a co-ordinated national IT strategy and the downgraded priority the Government attached to the vital area.

It said the shortage of relevant skills in the workforce constituted a crisis. Too little was being spent on research and development. The Government was failing to use its own procurement policies to help the industry.

The MPs rejected as simplistic the Government's assertion that the health of the British IT industry was less important than whether IT was being used effectively by British industry generally.

"It is wrong to neglect the strength of the UK's own IT industry and to regard the deteriorating balance of trade in IT products and services with complacency," they said.

Last year the trade deficit in IT and electronics amounted to £2.2 billion, the worst for 10 years, but the MPs insisted that a deficit was "not inevitable".

They pointed to the abolition of the post of Minister of Information Technology as evidence of the lower priority the Government attached to IT as a frontier technology.

They said that during their inquiry they had been "surprised to hear so many people disclaim responsibility for government IT policy".

The report said there were up to 30,000 unfilled vacancies in the IT field. The MPs described the shortage as deplorable.

There was little prospect of an early remedy. "We face a crisis both in quantity and quality".

The Government spent £1.8 billion last year on IT for itself, the MPs noted, but failed to use that for specific ends such as developing certain techniques, acting as a platform for exports, or enforcing common standards.

The committee made 52 recommendations, of which the foremost was that the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry should be responsible for all aspects of IT policy and report annually.

It called for measures to increase the provision of IT training and research in institutions and in industry, and to ensure equal access for European firms to the Japanese and American markets.

Last night Mr Derek Fatchett, Labour spokesman on education and training, said the report showed Britain was "falling further and further behind in our ability to use and develop IT".

He called for an emergency programme to give young people the necessary skills.

Trade and Industry Select Committee: Information Technology (Stationery Office, £5.90).

Another fine piece of headgear



David Bartlett tries two hats worn by Laurel and Hardy in their 1927 film *Hats Off at Christie's* in London yesterday. The hats are expected to fetch £25,000 today at a film and entertainment sale. David, aged 15, from Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol, is a Laurel and Hardy enthusiast and six years ago he became the youngest member of The Sons of the Desert, their official appreciation society. However, he does not expect to be bidding today. "I only get £1 a week pocket money", he said.

Cuba puts package to save shipyard

By Peter Davenport

Cuba has proposed a package to build a fleet of ships providing 900 jobs at the shipyards in Sunderland, whose closure was announced by the Government last week.

The plan, which would involve the Cubans leasing facilities and assuming financial risks, was disclosed yesterday by campaigners fighting to maintain some shipbuilding capacity on Wearside.

An official of Acemex, the Cuban state shipping authority, is expected to visit London next week for talks with the Department of Trade and Industry.

Last night Mr Alan Milburn, co-ordinator of the Save Our Shipyards campaign, said: "This is a golden opportunity with no strings attached for the Government. It should not be spurned because it would mean jobs for almost half the current workforce."

Under the proposed package the Cubans would lease the modern facilities at the Southwick yard of North East Shipbuilders to build a fleet of 10 cargo vessels worth £110 million under British management.

The last vessel being built on Wearside, a £5 million ferry, was launched earlier this week. If the Cuban package is not taken up, it will bring 600 years of shipbuilding on the river to an end.

Last night the Department of Trade and Industry said that officials will meet the Cuban representative, but it was anxious to do nothing that would jeopardize EEC funds worth £45 million for retraining.

Granada TV to build a 'media city'

By Richard Evans Media Editor

Granada Television is to create a "media city" in Manchester and Salford for Britain's new broadcasters, it was announced yesterday.

The company's 20-acre site will be a springboard "for many wishing to participate in a third age of broadcasting," Mr David Plowright, chairman of Granada, said.

Independent producers will rent offices on the site, making use of Granada services, together with other emerging communications systems.

Mr Plowright disclosed the plan at a staff conference where he announced the reorganization of the company into three divisions - facilities, production and distribution, and broadcasting.

Mr Plowright said: "The biggest change and biggest threat to Granada is that in 1992 we face the prospect of an auction to secure another franchise for the North-West. Granada retains a serious interest in trying to acquire a commercial television franchise beyond 1992."

"We may not win it, so we must continue to equip ourselves as an organization that can exist in its own right whether or not we are still licence holders."

Mr Geoffrey Stevens, a retired builder's merchant who had kept the school script of *King Charles II* for 56 years and saw it triple its estimate, said: "I'm absolutely astonished at the price."

It was written as a Christmas treat for 12 pupils of Hawthorn High School, in

Orwell's only play goes to Mr Blair

A mysterious Mr B. Blair paid £4,400 yesterday for a script of George Orwell's only play at Sotheby's English literature and history sale.

The auctioneers refused to confirm the buyer was related to the author, whose real name was Eric Blair.

Mr Geoffrey Stevens, a retired builder's merchant who had kept the school script of *King Charles II* for 56 years and saw it triple its estimate, said: "I'm absolutely astonished at the price."

It was written as a Christmas treat for 12 pupils of Hawthorn High School, in

Hayes, west London, including Mr Stevens.

One of Scott of the Antarctic's final letters, found with his body, sold to Quaritch, the dealer, for £37,000, triple estimate.

It includes the lines: "We have been to the Pole and we shall die like gentlemen - I regret only for the women we leave behind... If this diary

is found it will show how we stuck by dying companions."

The draft of a wartime letter from Churchill to Stalin about Poland sold for £18,150 (estimate up to £5,000).

The National Heritage Memorial Fund stepped in to save five items from the Sir William Herrick archive - an important collection of Jacobean state papers relating to the jeweller and treasury teller.

The vendor, a descendant of Herrick, had kept the documents at the Leicestershire Record Office, which had preserved them for 40 years. "The owner sold us the

bulk of the archive by private treaty sale, but pulled out the high value items", said Dr Kathryn Thompson, the Leicestershire county archivist.

A huge group of documents including 25 warrants signed by Francis Bacon, the philosopher, lawyer and statesman, was bought for £115,500 (estimate £100,000 to £120,000) by Quaritch.

At Sotheby's New York, the original radio play typescript of *The War of the Worlds*, by Orson Welles, sold to an American private collector for \$143,000 (£74,479). The price was four times its estimate.

Journalist denies murder case 'slur'

A journalist whose Press and television campaigns have cast doubt on the validity of the Carl Bridgewater murder trial nine years ago was accused yesterday of misleading the public.

On the 19th day of the appeal inquiry into the case, Mr Paul Foot, the journalist, was asked about his televised claim last year that there had been a cover-up relating to the original police hunt for the killers who shot the newsboy at Yew Tree Farm, Stourbridge, West Midlands, on September 19, 1978.

Mr Jeremy Roberts, QC, for the Crown, said Mr Foot in his television reconstruction of the case *Murder at the Farm*, had alleged that the defence was not made aware of evidence that might have assisted the accused.

Mr Roberts said there had been no duty on the prosecution to make the evidence available and there had been

no impropriety whatever. Mr Foot's allegation of a cover-up, counsel went on, amounted to an unfair slur that had been witnessed by seven million viewers.

Mr Foot refused to withdraw the allegation and denied that he had been unfair in his presentations of the case. If the law permitted what had taken place to take place, then the law was wrong, he said.

Mr Foot went on: "I have always had an open mind on the case. If I learnt today that they (the convicted men) were at the farm, I would renounce everything."

Michael Hickey, Vincent Hickey, his cousin, and James Robinson, were all given life sentences at Stafford Crown Court, on November 12, 1979, for murder and aggravated burglary.

Michael, aged 26, of no fixed address, has since been transferred from prison to Park Lane mental hospital on Merseyside. This followed a protracted prison rooftop protest he made about his conviction.

Vincent, aged 34, formerly of Badger's Close, Redditch, Hereford and Worcester, and Robinson, aged 54, of Wolston Croft, Wooley Castle, Birmingham, were each recommended to serve at least 25 years of their life sentences.

The three were refused leave to appeal in 1981 but Mr Douglas Hurd, the Home Secretary, acted in October last year to refer the case back to the court.



Mr Paul Foot: refused to withdraw allegation

Weekend food prices

Turkey still reigns on the Christmas tables

Four out of five households will choose turkey for their main Christmas meal this year. Prices range between 30p and 60p a lb for frozen birds in supermarkets to £1.20 for the top quality farm fresh product.

During the salmonella scare, it is important to ensure the frozen birds are properly thawed and that all poultry is thoroughly cooked.

Geese, in contrast, are part of our tradition, but have not adapted to modern mass production methods.

About half a million are likely to be sold this Christmas; expect to pay £2 to £2.50 a lb and possibly more in London.

Large family gatherings at Christmas also offer the opportunity to indulge in the large joints of beef, pork or ham.

For beef lovers, nothing can match sirloin on the bone but they must expect to pay about £2.90 a lb. Alternatively, a standing rib roast at about £1.75 a lb looks as splendid as it tastes.

Another treat is a crown of pork which is two sections of loin joined together. It will normally consist of 12 cutlets and cost between £1.40 and £1.70 a lb.

Suffolk hams are also less readily available, but bargain hunters need look no further than Harrods, which has whole gammons at £1.40 a lb, cheaper than many high street butchers.

For a special pre-Christmas party, farmed salmon is ideal: a 3lb to 4lb fish costs around £2.80 a lb and a larger 9lb one about £3.80 a lb.

There are good supplies of home-grown vegetables and some excellent imports, particularly calabrese broccoli from Spain, Italy and Jersey at 55p to £1.10 a lb.

Home-grown cabbages at 20p a lb, Brussels sprouts at 20p, carrots at 10p-30p, cauliflower at 60p-85p, parsnips at 20p-40p are all good quality.

Best salad ingredients are Chinese leaves 35p-65p a head, iceberg lettuce at 65p-£1 a head, round lettuce at 24p-30p, and red varieties at 65p-95p each. English watercress is 30p-40p a bunch.

Baby clementines at 25p-50p a lb are excellent. Spanish Napoleon and Almeria grapes are 40p-70p.

Most of the apples are excellent, particularly red delicious and McIntosh reds. Kiwi fruit at 14p-24p each and pineapples at 50p to £3 each are good.

Hotter prices for a Merrier Christmas



Ice Cream Christmas Pudding **£1.59**



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Sweet sized ice creams in a dark chocolate flavoured coating.



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More ideas for a merrier Christmas. From Bejam.



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Jacket Potato Kiev **£1.39**

4 baked potato halves filled with Garlic Butter and topped with Cheddar Cheese.



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16 Matthew's Golden Drummers	£2.69 £2.59	4lb Bejam Oven Chips	99p 89p
4lb Bejam Chicken Nibbles	£3.29 £2.99	4lb Birds Eye Garden Peas	£1.99 £1.79
14lb Bejam Turkey Breast Roast	£2.15 £1.99	500ml Young's Real Devonshire Double Cream + 10% EXTRA FREE	£1.48
FISH		4 Bejam Strawberry Ice Cream Bombes	£1.09 99p
24 Kibum Crabsticks	£2.29	Black Forest Gateau	
1lb Bejam Peeled Prawns	£2.99 £3.79	Bejam Party Size Black Forest Gateau	£3.69 £2.99
800g Bejam Cod Fillets	£2.99 £1.99	McVitie's Chocolate Truffle Party Cheesecake	£2.99 £2.99
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50 Bejam Cocktail Sausages	£1.25 99p		
20 Birds Eye Original Beef Burgers	£2.99 £2.79		
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THE ULTIMATE BAR CHART.

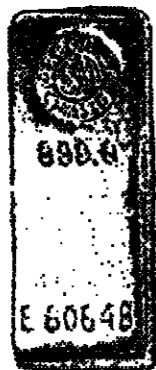
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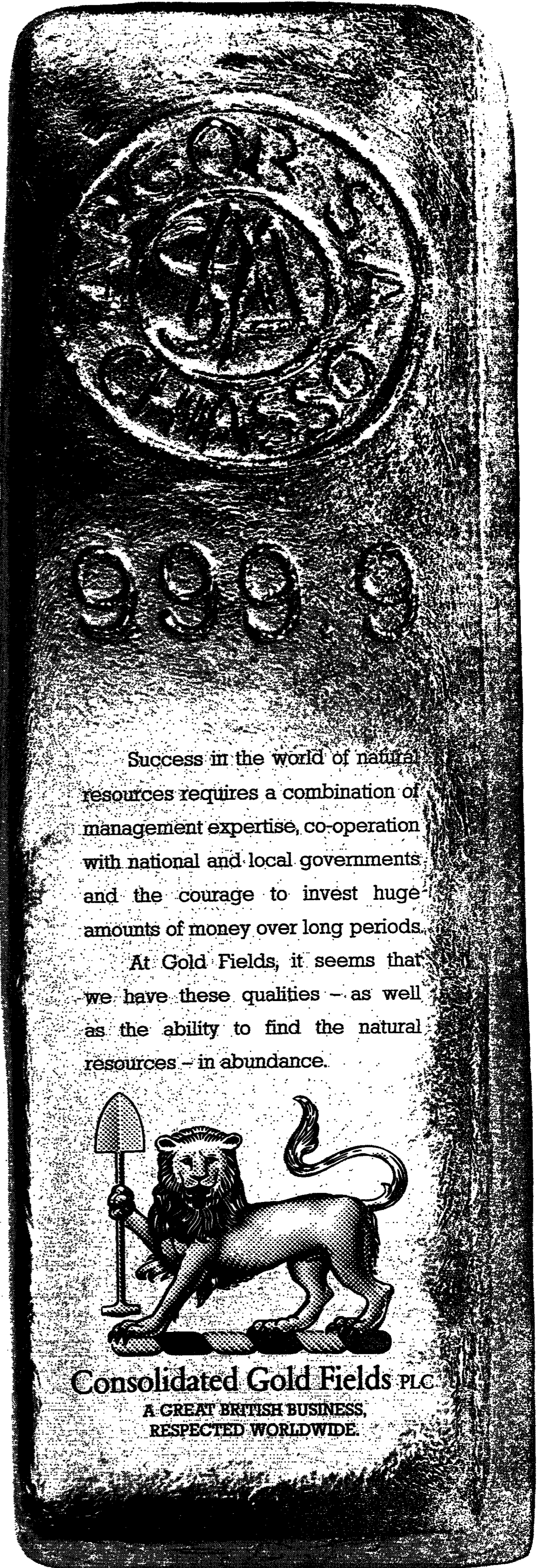
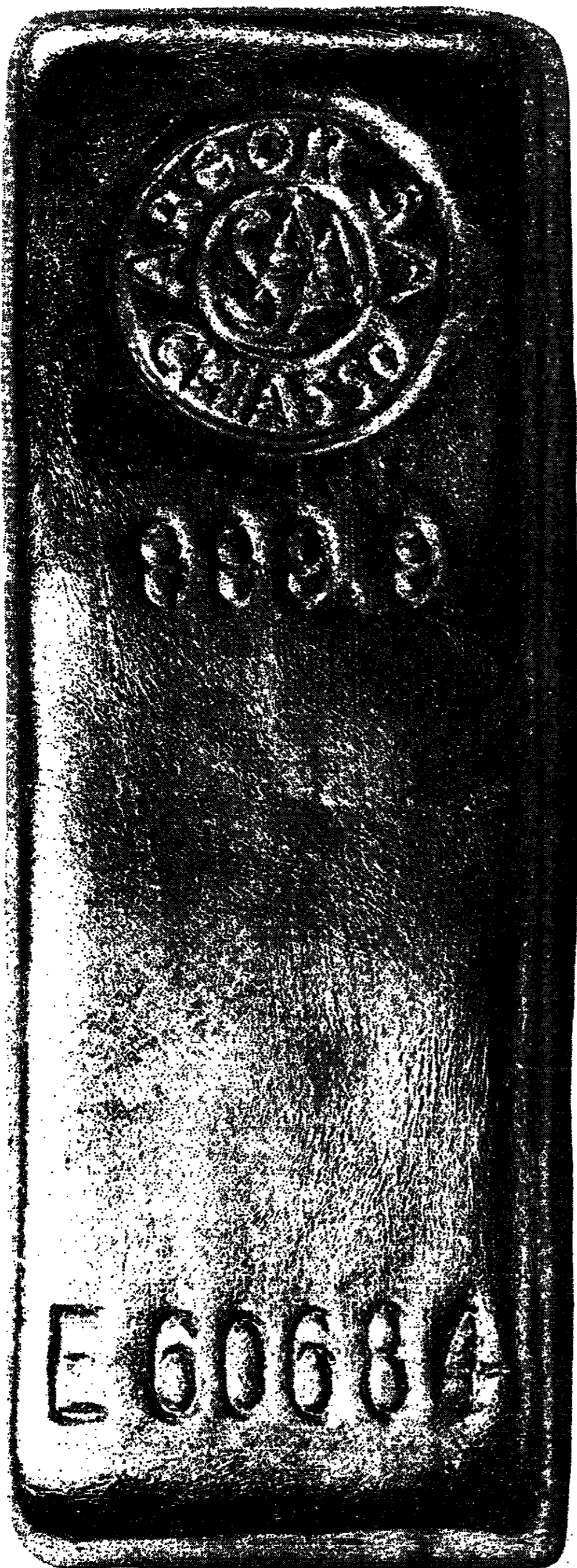
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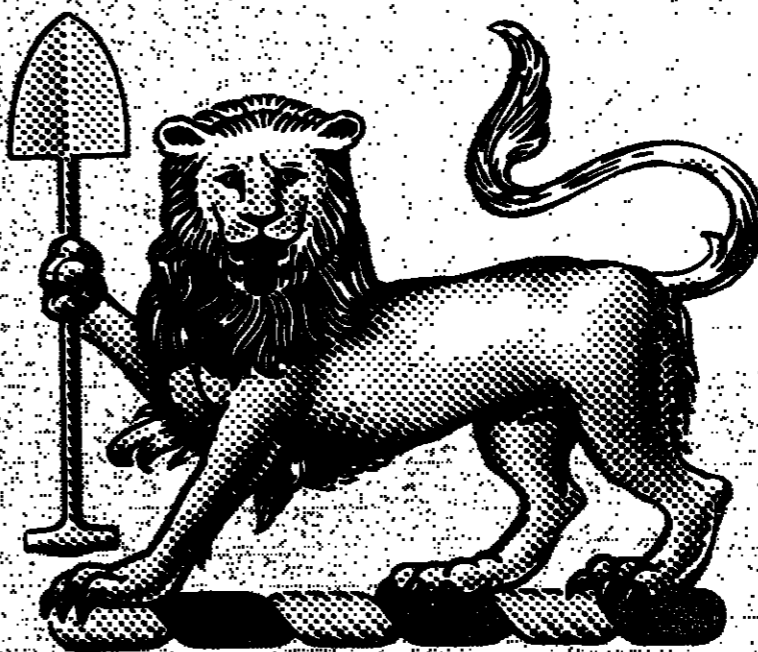
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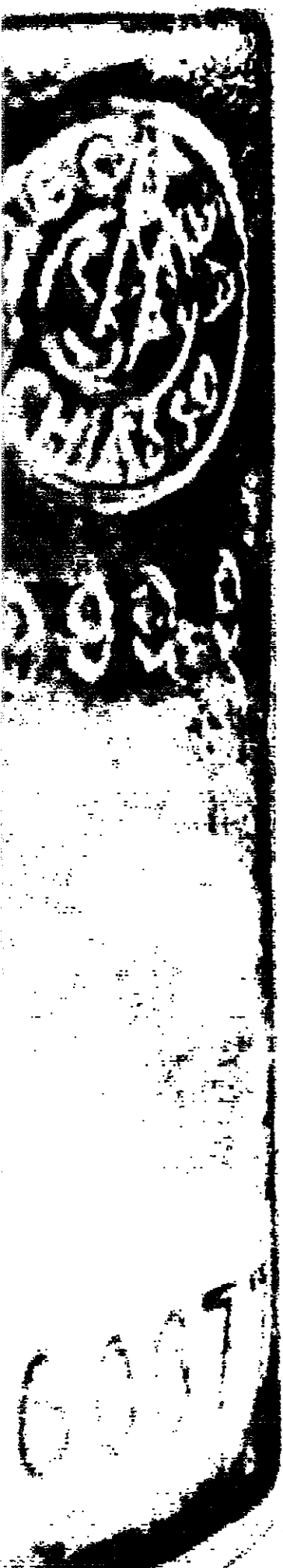


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Two plainclothes policemen in Stockholm yesterday escorting to a further session of questioning the man facing charges today over the Palme murder.

Charge in Palme murder

Stockholm — An unemployed and alcoholic Swede, aged 41, will be charged in Stockholm today with the murder nearly three years ago of former Prime Minister Olof Palme (Christopher Mosey writes).

The man, who was arrested in a dawn swoop on his flat in the Stockholm suburb of Sollentuna on Wednesday, has not been named, in accordance with Swedish law.

His lawyer, Mr Arne Liljeros, said he would plead not guilty. The Chief Public Prosecutor, Mr Anders Helin, said the hearing in Stockholm district court would be closed to press and public.

Swedish Radio said last night that a witness had positively identified the ac-

cus as the man seen waiting outside a cinema visited by Mr Palme on the night of his death, and that the accused's



The passport photograph of the suspect held yesterday.

alibi for the night of the murder, February 28 1986, had been disputed by other witnesses. The man was interrogated by police at an earlier stage in the investigation but was ruled out then as a likely suspect.

Conspiracy theories: The arrest was the first movement reported in the case since the former chief detective, Hans Holmer, rounded up Kurdish exiles two years ago.

Another conspiracy theory focused on the Tehran regime, but the futile police hunt indirectly led to a political scandal this year when Mrs Anna-Greta Leijon, the Justice Minister, was forced to quit for overstepping her authority and abusing her office.

WORLD ROUNDUP

Court overturns anti-English law

Ottawa — The Canadian Supreme Court yesterday overruled a Quebec provincial statute which had made it unlawful to display English-language commercial signs in the province, which is predominantly French-speaking (John Best writes).

In a long-awaited decision with important political implications, the court invalidated a section of Quebec's highly-controversial Bill 101, which banned the use of any language but French on public signs. It ruled that the section violated the province's own Charter of Rights.

The ruling places the provincial government in a dilemma. It can either rewrite the law in a way to make it judicially acceptable — perhaps by allowing English to be used on signs so long as French is given precedence — or it can adopt a *laissez-faire* attitude and allow signs to be posted in whatever language the sponsor wishes.

Nuclear waste inquiry

Seoul (AFP) — Prosecutors have launched an investigation into the alleged secret burial of nuclear waste after villagers and anti-pollution activists dug up 54 drums of the material, which they claimed was four times more radioactive than legally permissible.

Action against paper

Harare — *The Chronicle*, the Bulawayo newspaper crusading against a vehicle distribution racket said to involve senior ministers, heard yesterday that the Government is to take legal action against it (Jan Raath writes).

Helicopter shot down

Islamabad (AFP) — Mujahidin guerrillas have shot down an Afghan Army helicopter near the eastern garrison city of Jalalabad, killing at least 16 soldiers, resistance sources said here yesterday. The guerrillas fired rockets at the military helicopter soon after it took off from Jalalabad airport on Wednesday.

'Miracle' pair fined

Pescara (Reuters) — A Roman Catholic priest and a woman who convinced thousands of Italians that she had seen the Virgin Mary have been fined 500,000 lire (£220) for exploiting people's traditional beliefs.

More than 20,000 Italians flocked to a hill near this Adriatic city on February 28 after Maria Fioriti said that the Madonna had told her she would perform a miracle. Fioriti was supported by Father Vincenzo Diodati, a former professional footballer, who said Christ told him in a separate vision that the miracle would take place.

West Bank leaders promise to support US talks by restraining unrest

Israel stunned by 'betrayal'

Israel was stunned yesterday to learn that the United States, its trusted and often only ally, was prepared to talk to the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Mr Shimon Peres, the Foreign Minister, said he was saddened, and predicted the initiative would end as soon as the next petrol bomb was thrown. A spokesman for Mr Yitzhak Shamir, the Prime Minister, expressed regret and warned that it would not advance the cause of peace in the Middle East.

But the most telling comments came from ordinary people. "Arafat lies again and the Americans believe him. It's unbelievable," said Mr Moshe Avram in a greengrocer's shop. "My son is in the Army, now he is in real danger," said Mrs Miriam Ben-David in a bank. "Now we can only trust ourselves and we trust ourselves to

fight," said a young soldier at a bus stop in Jaffa Road. Everywhere people were shocked, angry and feeling betrayed.

Settlers started to demonstrate outside the Prime Minister's office. Some had been at the funeral on Wednesday of a settler killed in a fight with an Arab. "We are on our own now and must prepare for the worst," said Mr David Ahurina from Immanuel in the West Bank.

There was a different kind of stunned disbelief among Palestinians in the occupied territories, which were unusually calm and quiet.

Palestinian leaders were at first incredulous that the United States had at last agreed to talk to the PLO. They promised to do all they could to limit disturbances while talks got underway.

The real test of Mr Arafat's statement will be the level of violence in the occupied territories now. While stone-throwing by children is impossible to stop, serious attacks would undoubtedly end the dialogue.

Across the Israeli political spectrum there is a certainty that violence will continue at the level of Mr Arafat's presence in Geneva, his statements or the US decision (Nicholas Beeston writes). Moderate Arab states, which support Mr Arafat, are trying to convince Damascus to reach an Arab consensus.

an unacceptably high level and so rapidly persuade the Americans to change their position. "We believe that the United States will discover very soon the true face of the PLO and will realize that it cannot be a partner for nego-

Swedish envoy in key role

By Andrew McEwen
Diplomatic Correspondent

Two of the key figures in bridging the 13-year divide between Washington and the Palestine Liberation Organization were Sweden's Foreign Minister, Mr Sten Andersson and President Mubarak of Egypt.

Mr Andersson appears to have been the most effective intermediary with Mr Yasser Arafat, the PLO chairman, while Mr Mubarak is thought to have influenced Mr George Shultz, the US Secretary of State.

Mr Andersson held a meeting with Mr Arafat in Geneva on Wednesday, before the press conference at which the PLO chairman "clarified" his position after being dismayed by the State Department's unenthusiastic reaction to his speech at the UN General Assembly the day before.

It was Mr Andersson, who had spent six months of what he calls "silent diplomacy" trying to bring the two sides together, who sensed that only nuances divided them.

GENEVA: Mr Andersson gave details here of how he was instrumental in events leading to Washington's change of heart (Alan McGregor writes). The process started in March, he said, when he visited Israel and the West Bank, Jordan and Syria.

After talking to political leaders, including PLO executive members in Amman — and also to about a hundred boys, some paralysed for life, who had been shot by Israeli soldiers, he formed a clear impression that the Palestinians were aware, and seeking to come to terms with the fact, that neither Arabs nor Israelis could have all the land they had been fighting over. "It was being realized there must be a dialogue and an agreement saying the two had to live beside each other," he said.

American Jews outraged at turnabout

From Christopher Thomas
Washington

American Jewish leaders privately expressed shock and outrage yesterday as they scrambled to assess the full implications of Washington's decision to open talks with the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Jewish groups were stunned by the sudden US shift. Unusually, there was no prior consultation with them by Reagan Administration policymakers. Even the Israeli Embassy was informed only minutes before Mr George Shultz, the Secretary of State, made his announcement.

Publicly, there was little indication yesterday of the deep anger sweeping through the American Jewish community. Pro-Israeli politicians and organizations muted their reactions out of an obvious fear of creating an impression that the US and Israel were on a collision course.

Mr Shultz was closeted with his advisers in the hectic hours before his hastily summoned press conference, beginning exactly three minutes after the television networks began their nightly news broadcasts. Much of the country, therefore, watched the announcement live.

Middle East experts at the State Department studied every word and nuance of the remarks by Mr Yasser Arafat, the PLO leader, and unanimously concluded that it met US preconditions for opening a dialogue. Earlier, President Mubarak of Egypt telephoned Mr Shultz to tell him that Mr Arafat was preparing a critically important statement in Geneva.

Mr Mubarak's role was vital. He telephoned his Foreign Minister, Dr Ahmed Esmat Abdel-Meguid, in Geneva on Tuesday night and asked him to press Mr Arafat explicitly to renounce terrorism and unequivocally accept Israel's right to exist.

The US told the Egyptians that it would respond immediately to such a statement. State Department officials waited tensely for Mr Arafat's press

conference, and received a tape-recorded account of his key remarks by telephone from a US official.

Earlier in the day Mr Shultz told President Reagan what was about to happen. He also kept in touch with President-elect George Bush, who later issued a brief statement agreeing with the decision to talk to the PLO.

The announcement was the climax of two hectic days of lobbying by key Arab allies of America, notably Saudi Arabia and Egypt. King Fahd of Saudi Arabia sent two personal messages to Mr Reagan on Wednesday saying that Mr Arafat had gone as far as he could and the US should not miss this "historic opportunity".

Mr Shultz had also been under pressure from European allies in recent days to encourage Mr Arafat's efforts to begin a dialogue with America.

Just over a week ago, Sweden told the US privately that Mr Arafat planned to meet American conditions publicly, triggering a chain of events

culminating in yesterday's announcement. American officials gave Sweden a text of the sort of language that would be acceptable. Word came back that Mr Arafat would meet US conditions in his December 7 press conference in Stockholm. But his remarks fell short of American expectations.

Sweden persisted, sending a draft of what Mr Arafat would say to the United Nations General Assembly in Geneva.

Word was sent back to the PLO leader that Washington would respond immediately if he stuck to the draft. Again, American officials concluded that his remarks fell short of the mark.

"Our position has not changed," Mr Shultz said in making his announcement. "We see a change in the position of the PLO."

Mr Arafat had met the American criteria and "as a result the US is prepared for a substantive dialogue with PLO representatives".

Arafat faces his toughest challenge

From Christopher Walker, Tunis

The success of Mr Yasser Arafat in persuading the United States to re-open contacts has posed the stiffest challenge of his 19-year leadership of the Palestine Liberation Organization: making his pledges of moderation stick within a group which is notorious for its internal feuds.

In Tunis yesterday Western diplomats, who have been able to keep a closer watch on changes in the Palestinian movement than the Americans, were surprisingly optimistic. "By agreeing to this change of fundamental approach, the Americans have provided the PLO moderates with their greatest boost to date," said one diplomat.

"This is a great step forward that cannot be over-emphasized, but it still leaves us with a very long way to go. The whole purpose of a dialogue with Americans is to eventually get the Israelis around the table as well. Without that, there can be no solution."

Although the contacts began sharply yesterday morning between the respected US envoy, Mr Robert Pelletreau (a fluent Arabic speaker), and a senior PLO official based here, the switch in the PLO stand towards Israel was being seen as a bowing to the demands of the Palestinians living in the

Israeli occupied territories, who have been staging the *intifada* (uprising) for 12 months.

The decision to abandon the dream of returning to all the land lost in 1948, and to grasp the nettle of living cheek by jowl with Israel, has its bitter Palestinian opponents, but a combination of events — most notably the change in Moscow's attitude to regional conflicts — has weakened those who are calling Mr Arafat a "capitulationist" and demanding his assassination.

The clear demands of the *intifada* leaders for concrete results after the loss of more than 300 lives has combined with the recent isolation of those Arab states, especially Syria which has given most support to the Palestinian radicals, to reduce the chances that the PLO's new-found moderation can be sabotaged from within. But even the most starry-eyed observers admit this remains possible.

As the Algiers meeting of the Palestine National Council made clear, the PLO and its main legislative arm still harbour some ruthless men. Mr Abul Abbas, the mastermind of the 1985 hijacking of the Achille Lauro and a member of the PLO executive committee, showed callous indif-

ference to the death of Leon Klinghoffer, the elderly American Jew whom he suggested might have been "trying to swim for it" when he was shot in his wheelchair and dumped overboard. Mr Arafat has countered in public that men such as Mr Abbas were elected to their places in the PNC, and that he has no power over that process.

Both the Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Mr Georges Habash, and the smaller Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine, led by Mr Nayef Hawatmeh, have declared their opposition to the policy of moderation. But in Algiers, for the first time, they did it in the context of a majority decision of the delegates with which they have pledged to abide.

Mr Habash, who commands the second largest of the factions inside the PLO after the Fatah group led by Mr Arafat, did nothing in Algiers to disguise his grave reservations about accepting the key United Nations Resolution 242, which the PLO claims will form the basis of any international peace conference.

But by agreeing to scrap the previous insistence on unanimity, the veteran architect of

many previous incidents in the armed struggle received the loudest ovation of the conference when he announced that he was replacing his former revolutionary slogans with a new call for "unity until victory".

Much more dangerous for Mr Arafat's efforts to maintain the PLO's moderate image sufficiently to keep the new US-Palestinian dialogue in place will be the opposition of the five Syria-based radical groupings known collectively as the Palestine National Salvation Front. Their *de facto* leader, Mr Abu Musa, announced on November 18 in west Beirut that he would seek a new leadership of the PLO that would pursue the armed fight against Israel.

Describing acceptance of 242 as tantamount to treason, he called for the setting up of new alliances, including one with Muslim fundamentalist groups in the occupied territories.

But observers in Tunis believe that perhaps the greatest threat to the fledgling dialogue which began yesterday may come from the followers of Mr Abu Nidal, the most fanatical Palestinian terrorist, who is outside the PLO and a dedicated enemy of Mr Arafat.

Tunis envoy tipped for regional role

By Nicholas Beeston

The US Ambassador to Tunis, Mr Robert Pelletreau, the diplomat chosen by the US Secretary of State, Mr George Shultz, to meet the PLO leader, Mr Yasser Arafat, is being tipped for the post of Washington's top envoy in the region.

The current Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern and South Asian Affairs, Mr Richard Murphy, is due to retire next month.

Mr Pelletreau, aged 53, is a

career diplomat who has served in several Arab countries and was previously Ambassador to Bahrain. He has worked on drafting the formula for a Middle Eastern peace conference, played a key role assessing information during the hijacking in 1985 of a TWA jet by Arab guerrillas, and was seconded for two periods to the Pentagon.

Though his official meeting with Mr Arafat in Tunis is being hailed as a breakthrough in American foreign

policy, US diplomats and intelligence officers have maintained regular but unofficial links with PLO members for many years.

Under the Ford Administration, US nationals were evacuated from Beirut under the protection of the PLO's military wing Fatah. Subsequently the US Embassy in Lebanon, based in Muslin west Beirut, was protected by PLO guerrillas until their departure in 1982 during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.



Mr Robert Pelletreau: US representative in the talks.

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We in Britain eat, on average, 30 million eggs a day – 200 million a week.

The number of reported cases of food poisoning from salmonella linked to eggs is very small by comparison with the huge numbers of eggs that are consumed.

So far this year there have been 49 reported outbreaks of salmonella traced back to eggs. These outbreaks have affected 1,000 people, but this underestimates the numbers.

The Government and the industry are tackling the problem and, among other things, have issued codes of practice for poultry breeders and egg producers.

In the meantime people will want to know the facts about a basic part of their daily diet.

The Government has therefore asked its Chief Medical Officer, Sir Donald Acheson, to advise the public about the use of eggs. Sir Donald's present advice is:

“for healthy people there is very little risk from eating eggs which are **cooked**, however you prefer them – boiled, fried, scrambled or poached;

for vulnerable people – that is, **the elderly, the sick, babies, toddlers and pregnant women** – eggs should be thoroughly cooked until the white and yolk are solid;

but **everyone** should **avoid** eating **raw eggs or uncooked foods made from them** – for example, home-made mayonnaise, home-made mousses, home-made ice-cream or raw eggs mixed with drinks.”

The Chief Medical Officer adds:

“As with all cooked foods, egg dishes should be eaten as soon as possible after cooking. And if the dishes are not for immediate use they should be kept in the fridge.”

Please follow this advice.

Search for quake survivors scaled down

Disaster relief teams were starting to pull out of Armenia yesterday as the search for survivors was scaled down.

Unconfirmed reports from the area said the search in Spitak, which was completely destroyed in last Wednesday's earthquake, would end today when the rubble would be dynamited, and the ground cleared and disinfected.

Tomorrow marks the tenth day after the earthquake. Soviet medical officials have said that this is when the danger of epidemics - typhus and dysentery - increases. As of yesterday there were no reports of illness, although journalists arriving in Yerevan were said to have been told that the disaster area had been closed off to prevent epidemics. Some foreign aid workers have criticized the proximity of open coffins to emergency tents, saying that it is a prescription for disease to spread.

While the authorities in Moscow are still insisting that the search will go on until there is no possibility of finding anyone alive, additional relief workers are being discouraged from going to the area. The Foreign Ministry confirmed yesterday that a number of teams, including one of Kent firemen, had been refused permission to go to the area. Betraying some confusion about their function, the spokesman said: "There is no need for firemen now, all the fires have been put out."

The number of people rescued dwindles from day to day. Two days ago it was 60, yesterday, 20. One American

where relief supplies were being stored was being increased and stocktaking procedures tightened.

Inadequacies are still being reported in the relief effort. After the disclosure on Wednesday that 48 and not 28 villages had been badly damaged, the Politburo commission criticized the Armenian authorities for tardiness in restoring communications and ordered supplies of food, tents and clothing to be rushed to the rural areas.

Tass reported that a limited power supply had been restored to Leninakan and that three mobile post offices and some telephone lines had been set up, but many more were needed.

While praising the dedication of Soviet relief workers and the fortitude of Armenian survivors, some foreign relief workers have been quoted as saying that the initial work done by Soviet teams may have resulted in more loss of life as heavy blocks were first lifted then dropped indiscriminately on to the rubble.

In his Pravda interview, General Dubinsky claimed that rescue work was being hampered by Armenian hostility towards Moscow over the Kremlin's refusal to transfer the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan.

He said some Armenians resented the presence of 20,000 Soviet troops in the republic, believing they were Moscow's advance guard sent to enslave Armenia.

Letters, page 15



One of the few survivors in Spitak boiling water yesterday beside the rubble of her home.

Kremlin skips generation on top forces post

From Our Own Correspondent, Moscow

The Soviet Union yesterday announced the appointment of Colonel-General Mikhail Moiseyev, aged 49, as the new Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces. He replaces Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev, who has been transferred.

The announcement, published on the front page of the army newspaper, *Krasnaya Zvezda*, came more than a week after Soviet officials in Washington revealed to Western journalists that General Akhromeyev had been replaced. He will become a special adviser to President Gorbachov.

The timing of the disclosure, on the eve of Mr Gorbachov's speech to the United Nations General Assembly, led to speculation that he had disagreed with the unilateral reductions in troops and conventional weapons proposed by the Soviet leader.

Yesterday, Mr Viktor Karpov, a first Deputy Foreign Minister, denied that there had been any political reason for Marshal Akhromeyev to leave his post. He insisted that he had requested retirement on health grounds.

General Moiseyev is young for a Soviet chief of staff and is continuing the recent trend of "skipping a generation" in senior military appointments. Since January, 1987, he has been commander of the Far East military region, a post

Delors is distribute battle for

once held by the present Defence Minister, General Dmitri Yazov. Like Marshal Akhromeyev, General Moiseyev also becomes a first Deputy Defence Minister. The new Chief of Staff is likely to be kept busy, not only implementing official policy to cut the number of Soviet troops but trying to stem the deep dissatisfaction with military training and conscription among the young. A series of newspaper articles has highlighted the ruthless bullying of young conscripts and sadistic initiation rights. Yesterday, it was also revealed by *Krasnaya Zvezda* that students at many institutes of higher education across the country from Irkutsk in Siberia to Riga in Latvia and Tashkent in Soviet Central Asia, are boycotting their compulsory classes in military training. Their demands range from calls for changes in the training of reserve officers to the complete abolition of the reserve officer corps. Commenting on the boycott, Colonel General Demidov - head of the training directorate of the Soviet land forces - said that it was evidence of defects in the system of higher education and the fact that military departments of universities had been particularly resistant to perestroika.

Reforms fuel Czech buying spree

From Richard Bassett Prague

It is not only the conventional shops which are fast running out of stock on Westcelas Square here. As darkness falls each evening, a small stall appears selling inch-high black pyramids of Christmas incense for 10 crowns (50p) an ounce. Within seconds a crowd forms; within five minutes more than 300lb has been sold - an indication of the frenetic pace of buying in Prague at the moment.

In sweet shops, liquorice - the most sought-after delicacy for children - disappears within hours of going on sale. A queuing woman said: "If you are not third in line when it arrives, the chances are that all 800 sticks will be gone by the time you are served."

Behind this frantic buying is more than

just the Christmas season. There can be no doubt that the new economic reforms coming into force on January 1 have created near-panic buying as fears of inflation empty savings accounts.

The boom has caused unprecedented shortages, which have angered the usually phlegmatic Czechs. A few weeks ago the disappearance from Prague shops of sanitary towels provoked a demonstration by Czech women. The protest was a warning to the authorities of increasing impatience among a people for whom long queues have for the past 10 years been the exception, not the rule.

Last month toothpaste became so rare that no customer was allowed to buy more than one tube. Toilet paper disappeared entirely for a month.

Although the Government has done its best to reassure the public that the new

economic measures will not "create price rises", rumours say otherwise.

The theoretical aim of the new economic measures is to remove the difference between the Czech crown and the so-called Tuzex crown, which can be used for buying imported Western goods in foreign currency shops and now has a higher value than the normal crown.

But ominously, there is much talk in the new laws of removing "artificial subsidies". The inevitable references here among officials to "market forces", however coyly phrased, are inevitably interpreted as meaning big price rises.

With few Czech housewives prepared to give the Government the benefit of the doubt, the largest number of savings accounts anywhere in Eastern Europe are being translated into a shopping spree unprecedented in the Soviet bloc.

Detectives on trail of Prado vandal

From Harry Debelius, Madrid

Detectives on the trail of the person who tore a priceless Goya painting at the Prado Museum are anxious to trap the culprit before another attack, it was learnt here yesterday.

The Interior Ministry investigators suspect that the person who punched a tiny hole in the lower right hand corner of Goya's "Execution of Mary 3" works at the Prado on the night shift and is thoroughly familiar with the museum's layout and the security guards' routine.

They also believe that the person has either a grudge

against a superior or a mental problem.

It is the second time in little over a year that malicious damage to great art treasures at the Prado has been carried out. On the previous occasion, a museum spokesman disclosed, tiny pin pricks were found in about half a dozen paintings with religious themes. The pinholes marred the forehead of a painted cardinal, and the breasts of the Virgin Mary and of female saints in several other canvases. The damage was so minimal that the authorities are not even sure it was detected immediately, and cannot tell if it was the work of a museum employee or of one of the thousands of visitors who tour the museum every day.

This time they know when the damage occurred - between 9pm on Monday night and 8am the next morning - a time when there was no one in the building other than a detachment of security guards, the cleaning women and a few members of the maintenance department. The puncture, made with a ballpoint pen, appears to be deliberate.

"It's not easy to punch through these old paintings,"

the museum's spokesman said. They have several layers of canvas glued to the back of them." He described the damage as "minimal", consisting of a small hole made with some kind of instrument without a very sharp point.

The painting was quickly restored and was back on the wall yesterday. No cost was placed on the damage since the picture, one of Goya's most celebrated works, has never been put up for sale.

All the night staff except the cleaners are employees of the Prado, and even they are vetted by investigators.

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You will find in the book a full explanation of a great new idea and many beautifully illustrated examples of how it works in simple ways to reinforce the positive human qualities. This has nothing to do with cultism, religion, philosophy or politics. It has everything to do with the simple human values which are so neglected and undervalued today. It is an idea with tremendous implications. Please take it seriously.

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History has shown us that people of influence, vision and goodwill can do much to hasten the spread of new ideas and new movements. Never was a new movement needed so urgently as this. I am inviting and urging you to join with me to help in the early stages of this great new movement, using your personal influence, your professional skill and your financial power in whatever ways suit you best. More power to you.

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Koreas to open frontier

Seoul (AFP) - South Korean businessmen are to be allowed to visit the North, and traders from North Korea to visit the South, the Trade and Industry Ministry here announced.

The new regulations come into effect next month, and are in line with proposals made in July by President Roh Tae Woo of South Korea.

Previously, South Koreans had faced imprisonment if it was discovered that they had visited the North.

Voter boom

Delhi (AP) - The lower house of the Indian Parliament has unanimously approved a constitutional amendment to reduce the voting age from 21 to 18. If approved by the upper house, the measure would add up to 50 million to the next electoral roll.

Chad project

Ndjamena (AFP) - The Chad Government unveiled proposals to spend an estimated \$26 million to rebuild the war-torn north of the country.

Author's prize

Paris (AP) - The Mexican author, Señor Octavio Paz, aged 74, was awarded the 100,000-franc (€9,000) De Toqueville Prize by the Institute of France.

Fans charged

Athens (AP) - Eight soccer hooligans have been charged with causing damage totalling £200,000 in clashes with police during a Greek Cup game at the Olympic stadium.

Death at 109

Lupazzano (AP) - Signor Giovanni Ferzini, reportedly the oldest man in Italy, died in his village on the hills south of Parma where he spent nearly all of his 109 years.

Angola toll

Lisbon (Reuters) - Angolan troops killed 62 Unita rebels for the loss of 12 men in the week leading up to Tuesday's peace settlement for southern Africa, Angola has claimed.

Hotel closure

Singapore (Reuters) - The celebrated Raffles Hotel is to close partially for renovation for almost two years from early in 1989.

Bandit swoop

Nairobi (AFP) - More than 600 people have been arrested in east Kenya in a security force crackdown on banditry.

French strikes persist

From Susan MacDonald, Paris

Fragile, confused, a poor speaker and credulous is how Socialist deputies in the National Assembly describe their Prime Minister, M Michel Rocard, according to a poll in the daily newspaper, *Le Quotidien*.

It is a sign of the confusion in France today that the opposition MPs are perhaps a fraction kinder, calling the Socialist Prime Minister simply a man alone, lightweight and weak-willed.

The fact that deputies from all parties consider him intellectually honest and kindly only reinforces the image of a man unable to get to grips with governing the country, who is better liked on the right than within his own ranks.

As this feeling deepens under the weight of the strikes, bets are being taken in the National Assembly on how long he will last and, more difficult, who could succeed him. People in Paris, Marseilles, Lyons and other key cities towns are suffering the effects of transport, airline, postal and electricity strikes which have dragged on since mid-October.

Two weeks ago, M Rocard announced that the Metro and bus strikes had been resolved. The Army, who had been ferrying Paris commuters into work in lorries, was ordered back to barracks. A week ago,

the Prime Minister, in trying to calm his own backbenchers, let slip the remark that he had perhaps underestimated the determination of the public sector strikers, whose salaries have failed to keep pace with inflation for several years.

Today the Paris Metro is in a worse state than ever. Four lines have shut down and the



M Rocard: Admitted he had underestimated the strikers, others are on half-strength, thanks to a highly effective strike by 169 maintenance workers which is taking more trains off the tracks.

Above ground, Paris is locked in a giant traffic jam and exhaust fumes fill the lungs of those who know there is no alternative but to walk. True, the buses are back on the roads, but bursting at the seams with passengers as they crawl through town. Air

France's operations have also been crippled by strikes of maintenance staff.

Fights are being cancelled daily as the Christmas and New Year holidays approach.

Small businesses all over France are in danger of going under as a combination of postal and transport stoppages have ruined their Christmas trade.

Strikes in the nuclear power stations have reduced electricity supply levels to a dangerous point. Power cuts appear unavoidable if present salary negotiations fail.

Traditionally, France's public sector workers have accepted lower salaries in return for the security of a job for life. But as the wage gap between the private and public sectors has widened, it has become obvious that restructuring is necessary.

"Not just yet," was M Rocard's reaction when faced with the task, but his determination to refuse an overall strategy in favour of a case-by-case approach within the annual 2.8 per cent inflation level has already weakened.

In every affected area, the CGT, the Communist-backed union, is causing the bother. The Government has praised other unions for being reasonable, while the CGT is determined to build its campaign and continue the fight.

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Delors is poised to distribute spoils of battle for EEC jobs

From Michael Dynes, Villers-le-Temple

M Jacques Delors, President of the European Commission, will today preside over a bizarre EEC ritual which has become known as the "Night of the Long Knives". He is to gather his newly appointed team of commissioners at an ancient fortified monastery, deep in the Belgian Ardennes, to decide who is to get what job.

Having refused a say in the nomination for the new Commission during the EEC summit meeting at Hanover in June, M Delors is determined that he will have the final word in allocating the Brussels portfolios.

All 16 appointees have been sharpening their knives for weeks for the final showdown. But all are trembling in the knowledge that this dapper Frenchman wields the biggest knife of all.

To maximize his leverage, M Delors has instructed his new colleagues to arrive promptly at the former headquarters of the Order of Knights Templars of St John of Jerusalem, built by their founder, Gerard de Villers, in 1257 and now converted into a handsome hotel-restaurant in the country retreat of Villers-le-Temple.

The isolated ecclesiastical setting is appropriate for the messy business of deciding who gets what. "It is a bit like a papal conclave, when the cardinals gather to decide who is going to be the next Pope," one official said.

"The only difference is that the Pope has already been appointed and he has to

decide what diocese the cardinals will be given."

Although the Brussels rumour mill has been grinding out predictions for weeks, there is no guarantee that those tipped to get particular jobs will actually do so.

The only reliable rule of thumb is that Britain, West Germany, France, Spain and Italy, which each have two commissioners, will be given one of the senior posts while the smaller member states will have to be content with the humbler tasks.

In this *voie de portefeuilles*, as M Delors calls it, Mr Leon Brittan, the UK's senior commissioner, appears to be in line to inherit the important role of competition commissioner. The job could be a difficult one, as the Commission is seeking to increase its powers to vet cross-frontier mergers, to which the United Kingdom has consistently objected.

Mr Brittan had made it known that he wanted Lord Cockfield's job overseeing the internal market. But after Mrs Thatcher snubbed M Delors by refusing to re-appoint Lord Cockfield, the indignant Frenchman let it be known that the portfolios were not to be considered a "national preserve".

Mr Bruce Millan, Britain's junior commissioner, the former Labour Scottish Secretary, who, according to some Brussels bureaucrats, distinguished himself in the eyes of Mrs Thatcher by voting to stay out of the Common Market in the 1973 referendum, could be awarded the responsibility of overseeing the Community's regional development funds.

After the agreement reached at the February summit meeting in Brussels, these funds are set to increase to more than £9 billion by 1992, much of which will be distributed to the poorer member states. Mr Millan's accounting background will be a distinct advantage here, especially in view of the growing concern over corruption and mismanagement in EEC finances.

Here, Martin Baugemann, the former West German Economics Minister, is almost certain to inherit Lord Cockfield's mantle as Commissioner for the Internal Market - widely regarded as the most important of the Brussels portfolios.

But the job is likely to be shorn of the controversial issue of fiscal approximation, as well as financial services. Mr Frans Andriessen, the former Agriculture Commissioner, from the Netherlands, is likely to move over to external relations to handle the delicate issue of protectionism in what foreigners fear will become a "Fortress Europe".

Whatever the outcome, M Delors is in a strong position to get his own way. With his fellow commissioners isolated from their staff and supporters, they will have no option but to fight for their own corner. Although national and personal egos are at stake, there is no alternative but to accept what M Delors offers.

Pre-poll killings scar Sri Lanka paradise

From Edward Gorman, Matara, Sri Lanka

In this close-knit, south Sri Lankan fishing community, set on some of the world's most beautiful coastline - its deserted golden beaches fringed by coconut palms - the approach of presidential elections is being watched with undisguised fear.

The community, a traditional stronghold of the underground Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (People's Liberation Front), has suffered more than most and people have lost count of the numbers killed. At first, the murders were intermittent. The victims were mostly local government officials, policemen, army officers and those who openly sided with the ruling United National Party.

The killers - and they made no secret of the fact in blood-red slogans dashed on roadside walls - were JVP activists committed to the overthrow of what they regard as the illegitimate, corrupt and autocratic Government of President Jayewardene. But recently the killings have taken on a new aspect as paramilitary groups, with what many here believe is the backing of the local police and Army, seek revenge for the slaughter.

Mataras have grown used to the sight of corpses, disfigured or burned, either dumped in the centre of the town or left hanging from lampposts. Everyone, it is clear, is to take note. These are detestable murders carried out by shadowy death squads such as the Green Tigers or the newly-emergent People's Revolutionary Red Army - names which send a chill to the bone of local people.

The brutality in the name of democracy is shocking. A bullet in the side of the head, it seems, is no longer good enough. New methods include burning alive with car tyres,



Villagers in Hambantota, Sri Lanka, looking at a supporter of the ruling United National Party killed by political rivals.

hanging and even hammering to death. There have also been cases where victims have had finger and toenails ripped out.

The town, meanwhile, has been paralysed for months by JVP strikes (*hartals*) which have shut schools and the university and regularly closed banks and shops.

Hospitals have had to close because of a shortage of fuel to run generating equipment, and many government departments have been inoperable for weeks with the staff in hiding. Shopkeepers face a terrible dilemma every day.

Leaflets from the JVP threaten them with disfigurement or death for disobeying orders to close the troops threaten them with arrest unless they open.

The attentions of a visiting journalist here are particularly unwelcome. "If my name appears in any one of the newspapers I will be shot," was the blunt explanation of an educated local official.

Even the local commander of the security forces no longer displays the confidence he had a month ago. Then Colonel P.V. Pathirana had talked of a

return to normal. The buses were running again and the banks were open. He was sure that an election could be held.

But now the colonel is on the defensive. "A normal election is a bit difficult," he admitted, "in the sense that most of the staff required to run the polling-stations are still in hiding."

He claimed that less than 1 per cent of the people of Matara supports the JVP. "I know that they are back-handers and scoundrels, who will creep up in the night and kill you in your sleep," he said.

"They will never come to open warfare," he continued "because they know we would finish them off."

COLOMBO: A Sri Lankan human rights group, the United Organizations for Peace and Democracy, said yesterday that security forces had killed 786 people last month in "state terrorism" (Renter reports).

"We believe that most of the people killed had no connection with Sinhalese militant groups," said a spokesman for the group, which includes clergymen and lawyers.

Bhutto stays out of province crisis

From Zahid Hussain, Karachi

Miss Benazir Bhutto's Government was facing a serious political crisis after the Governor of Pakistan's western province of Baluchistan, General Musa Khan, a retired officer, dissolved its newly elected Assembly yesterday.

According to reports, the Governor acted on the advice of the Chief Minister, Mr Zafarullah Khan Jamali, who is heading a coalition administration between the Pakistan People's Party and the Islamic Democratic Alliance. The move came after a minister defected to the opposition, ending Mr Jamali's majority of one seat. Miss Bhutto told the National Assembly in

Islamabad yesterday that she was not consulted by the Governor on his decision to dissolve the Baluchistan Assembly. But the Prime Minister defended the action, insisting that it was in

Karachi (AFP) - Mr Zain Noorani, Pakistan's former Foreign Minister, said peace in Afghanistan would come only when a representative government was installed in Kabul.

accordance with the Constitution. She said the federal Government was not going to intervene in provincial mat-

ters. But Mr Akbar Bugti, the leader of the opposition Baluchistan National Alliance in the provincial Assembly, described the action as illegal and unconstitutional. Mr Bugti, a former Governor of Baluchistan, claimed that the decision to dissolve the Assembly was taken only two hours after he had managed to get a majority in the House.

He said that the Chief Minister had resorted to this action in order to safeguard his position. The opposition has called a strike in Quetta, the provincial capital, and a protest rally would be addressed by the opposition leader. Baluchistan presents a

unique situation where Miss Bhutto's People's Party had entered into a coalition with its main political rival, the Alliance. The Chief Minister, who heads the provincial Muslim League, had been a close associate of the late President Zia. He was also the Chief Minister of the caretaker provincial government appointed by Zia.

Mr Jamali was re-elected Chief Minister two weeks ago thanks to the casting vote of the Speaker of the Assembly, after both political groups got 22 votes. Then came the defection of the minister, which changed the situation dramatically.

Murder of Los Angeles family

Police ask Briton to testify in US

From Ivor Davis, Los Angeles

Scotland Yard, acting on behalf of American police, has asked a London taxi driver, Mr Ashley Paulle, to go to Los Angeles to testify in proceedings against a man accused of murdering a family of four. Mr Paulle, a cousin of the defendant, lives in Crowthorne, Berkshire.

Mr Harvey Rader, aged 46, who is accused of the murders committed in October 1982, is due to appear in court on January 10. Mr Paulle has so far refused to return to California.

Mr Rader denies involvement in the disappearance of Mr Sol Salomon, his wife Elaine and their children, Michelle, aged 15, and Mitchell, aged nine, whose

bodies were never found. The case has been on the Los Angeles police department books for more than six years. Based on interviews in Britain and Los Angeles, police filed murder charges against Mr Rader in September. Mr Rader, a car mechanic from London, is being held in the Los Angeles county jail without bail.

Last October Mr Larry Bird, a Los Angeles detective, flew to London to meet Chief Superintendent Graham Melvin of Scotland Yard, Inspector Dennis Sharpe and Mr Paulle. Mr Bird said: "Mr Paulle said that on the basis of legal advice he did not want to return to Los Angeles to testify. We have asked Scotland Yard to ask him to change his mind." In 1983, Mr Rader was arrested.

In return for Mr Paulle's statement the District Attorney gave Mr Paulle immunity from prosecution but later tried to prosecute him for the murders.

A judge in Los Angeles dismissed the case, ruling that the District Attorney had improperly revoked his immunity. Mr Paulle returned to England and charges were also dropped against Mr Rader. A year later, Mr Rader was arrested in Los Angeles for allegedly making a false declaration on his immigration application. He was deported to Britain, but a year later he was charged in Los Angeles with entering the United States with a forged passport, and imprisoned. After his release he was rearrested again and formally charged with the Salomon killings.



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PARLIAMENT

Security Service 'not interested in unions'

The Security Service was not interested in the normal and proper doings of the trade unions or other groups which might campaign against government policy...

nothing against thrillers as an art form, those who unwittingly got their ideas of the Security Service from Sapper, le Carré and Deighton, would not bring much understanding to the Bill...

terrorism and a shift of emphasis in its work towards counter-terrorism had been marked and successful. In regard to the threat of Irish terrorism, the Security Service had gained much information that had been used directly and immediately in preventing attacks...

might collectively or individually, overtly or clandestinely, be planning the deliberate overthrow of parliamentary democracy and in doing so represent a real threat to the security and safety of the country...



Slimline Smith nearly ready for the fray

Mr John Smith, Labour's shadow Chancellor (above), who suffered a heart attack in October, said yesterday that he hopes to be back in the Commons before the end of January...

Carlisle case Abortion foetus inquest is demanded

An inquest should be held into the death of a foetus in Carlisle which was aborted and "lay struggling for life for three hours", MPs from all sides urged during questions.

They were told by Mr Douglas Hogg, Under Secretary of State for the Home Office, that the Home Secretary had felt there was no compelling reason to hold an inquest.

He said that this was a bona fide lawful abortion, the reasons for carrying it out were compelling and, as the foetus was incapable of surviving, it was thought desirable to spare the mother further distress.

Mr David Alton (Liverpool, Moseley Hill, Dem) said that the grounds given for the abortion in this case was disability, a non-recurring possible skin complaint that was in no way life threatening.

HOME OFFICE

tions passed by the DHSS and accepted by the hospital services were flagrantly broken by this case? It was high time to end disgraceful happenings of this kind.

Mr Hogg replied that he was conscious of the strong feelings of a number of MPs on this subject.

The matter was given careful consideration by ministers... Sir Bernard: The law has been broken.

Mr Hogg... and the conclusion that they arrived at was the conclusion he had outlined to the House. It would be wrong to depart from it now.

Mr Thomas McAvey (Glasgow, Rutherglen, Lab) asked on what grounds the Home Secretary had decided that there should be no inquest.

This abortion contravened the Infant Life Preservation Act and the Abortion Act.

It was against the requirements of the Department of Health. No resuscitation equipment was available.

Mr Hogg did not accept that there was a breach of the 1929 Act.

Ministers had looked carefully at this case, realizing that some MPs felt strongly about it. The conclusion he had outlined was the right conclusion.

Salmonella and egg production

£1½m 'too much to save Currie'

The sum of £500,000 being spent by the Government to restore public confidence in eggs was too little to repair the damage done to the egg industry and too much to spend to save the face of Mrs Edwina Currie...

Mr Kinnoch had quoted Mrs Currie as saying that most of the country's egg production was affected by salmonella while the Minister of Agriculture, Mr John MacGregor, said that that was not so.

Later, during business questions, Mr David Steel (Tweeddale, Edinr and Lauderdale, Dem) said that many of them would vote against an order on ministerial salaries next Tuesday unless something was done about Mrs Currie.

of ministerial responsibility, she should have been relieved of her job by now. Mr John Wakeham, Leader of the House, said that he did not accept those strictures but took note of what was said.

Yard closure 'act of destruction'

The Government had examined the widely canvassed possibility of a substantial order for general cargo ships from Cuba. But there was no guarantee that such an order could be secured.

Mr Robert Clay (Sunderland North, Lab) said that shipyard workers and the townspeople might even have felt able to swallow the decision, though with some bitterness, if there had not been any order.

Mr Christopher Mullin (Sunderland South, Lab) said that the Department of Education had recently invited tenders for an Antarctic survey ship.

Arafat speech is big step forward

Mr Yasser Arafat's recent renunciation of violence is a considerable step forward in resolving the Middle East conflict and the British Government would certainly encourage it.

Earlier, Dame Jill Knight (Birmingham, Edgobaston, C) asked whether the Prime Minister shared her hope, after the statement by Mr Arafat, that perhaps the way was clear for an international conference.

Mr Douglas Hard, Home Secretary, said that Mr Hattersley was always anxious to exaggerate the bad news and explain away the good news.

Hattersley attack on crime

Mr Roy Hattersley, chief Opposition spokesman on home affairs, accused the Home Secretary of complacency and smugness in his approach to crime.

Government to give cash for causeway

The Bill would dismantle the Scottish Transport Group, which employed 10,000 people. The group's main subsidiary, the Scottish Bus Group, employed 9,000 people and had 3,000 buses.

Mr Riffkind, moving the second reading of the Bill, emphasized the Government's determination to create a transport system based on local needs.

Parliament next week

Both Houses will rise for the Christmas recess on Thursday. The main business in the House of Commons next week is expected to be:

Two MPs involved in scuffle

There was a scuffle inside the Commons early on Thursday morning as Mr George Galloway (Glasgow, Hillhead, Lab) and Mr Barry Porter (Wirral South, C) appeared to square up to each other.

Government to give cash for causeway

Mr Riffkind, moving the second reading of the Bill, emphasized the Government's determination to create a transport system based on local needs.

Scotland

The Bill would dismantle the Scottish Transport Group, which employed 10,000 people. The group's main subsidiary, the Scottish Bus Group, employed 9,000 people and had 3,000 buses.

Thatcher rebuffs Biffen

Mrs Thatcher took the early opportunity offered to her by Labour MP to say that she disagreed with the statement earlier in the day by Mr John Biffen, one of her former ministers, that there might no longer be a need for Trident.

Extradition complaint

The Irish Republic Government's extradition procedures were clearly unsatisfactory, the Prime Minister said during questions.

Safeguards for whisky

The recent EEC decision on alcohol definition marked the Government's determination to safeguard the whisky industry, Mrs Thatcher said at questions.

ID card plan rejected

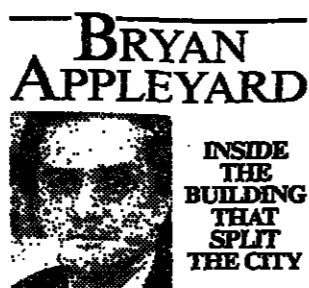
Mr Douglas Hard, the Home Secretary, said during questions that the Government did not favour plans for a national identity card.

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring the name 'Lloyd deca' and 'control'.

SPECTRUM

Lloyd's, the decade of controversy

Exactly 10 years ago a large number of men in perfectly boring suits embarked upon one of the most unexpected pieces of artistic patronage this country has seen.



BRYAN APPELYARD INSIDE THE BUILDING THAT SPLIT THE CITY

from the start - they wanted a building that they would not immediately grow out of and they wanted a building by an architect who was, as Blackmore keeps putting it, "world-class".

But Lloyd's gave us No 1 Lime Street, a shimmering, encrusted mass of design ingenuity and exuberance.

But weren't there qualms about a man whose major building was the Pompidou Centre? Green says: "I think we were very much more interested at that time in Richard's ideas of how he could make maximum use of a rather irregularly-shaped site to create the largest possible underwriting floor with the minimum of obstruction."

In fact, in view of the controversy the building has since aroused, the initial responses were remarkably favourable. The first model appeared in summer, 1978. Green says: "People were enthusiastic. Most thought: 'Thank God it's not just another steel and glass box!'"

That early model was to prove remarkably close to the finished building. The main change was the massive expansion in the size of the boxes housing the air-conditioning systems at the top of the building. But controversy, in the event, did not really get going until the building began to rise. There was some dismay at the concrete columns - these had originally been stainless steel, but had been vetoed by the fire authorities.

created strange, irregular spaces on the site.

"By the time they realized about all the pipes and stuff on the outside, it was too late to do anything about it," Green says. "I'm not being mischievous. They could see they were there in the models."

Green thinks there were two reasons for the shock: first, lay people find it difficult to imagine drawings and even models as completed buildings and, secondly, everybody thinks they can do it better.

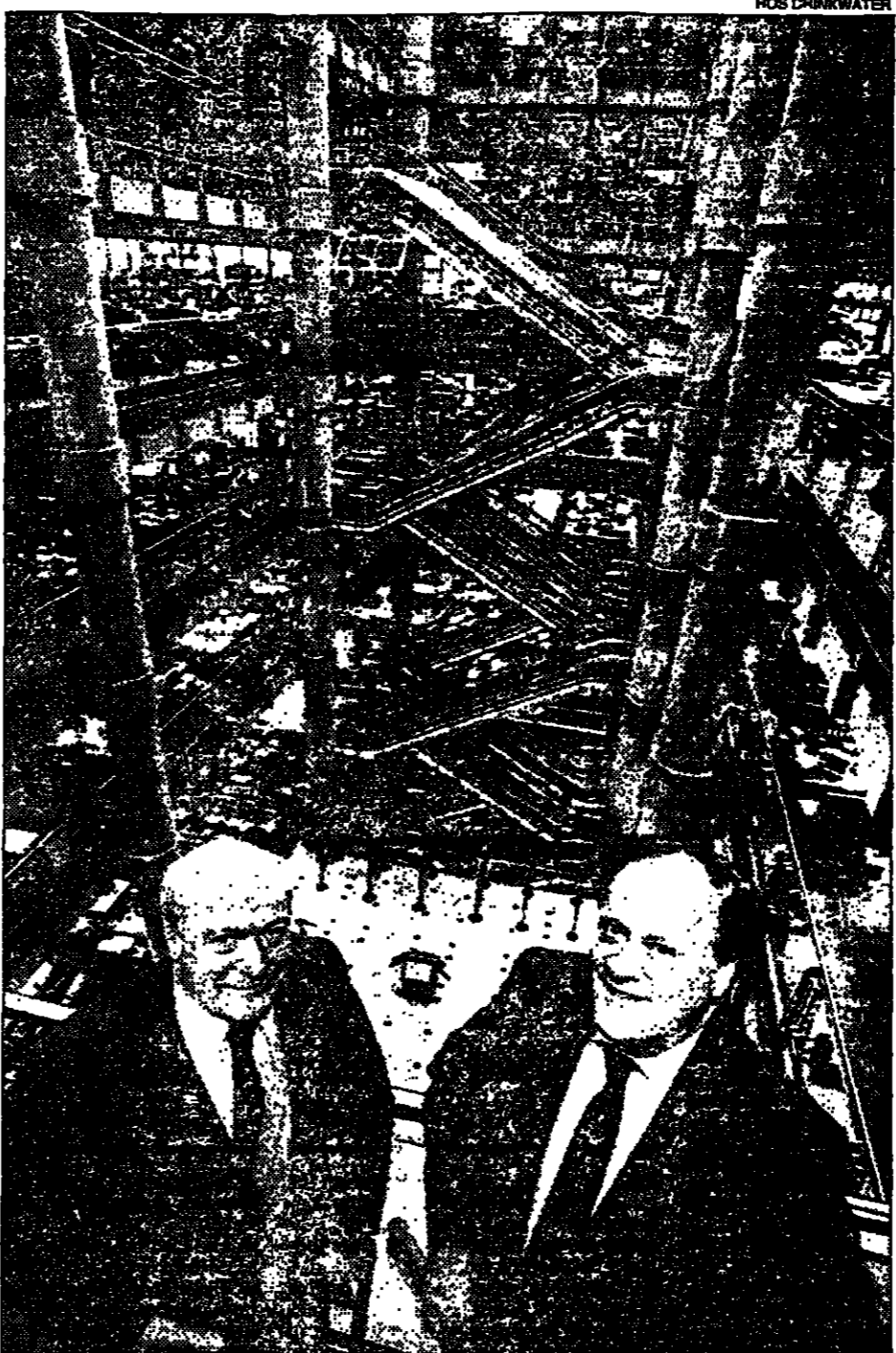
"Architecture is probably the most peculiar of the arts, the most difficult to understand and appreciate. But everybody, when they look at a building, becomes the greatest potential architect or architectural critic in the world, and they think they could certainly have done a better job themselves. It's a peculiarity of the British in particular."

The first head-on aesthetic clash that arose as the members of Lloyd's realized the revolutionary nature of what they had built came on the issue of interior decoration. Green's successor as Lloyd's chairman, Peter Miller, rejected Rogers' plans for the top floor offices and brought in an outside designer. Blackmore believes Rogers simply did not realize that a fairly traditional chairman's office had been expected all along.

But, in spite of all the mutterings from within Lloyd's, Blackmore and Green remained enthusiasts for the building. This became even more difficult after its opening as Lloyd's members complained about teething troubles, and stories began to circulate that the entire building was a disaster.

The complications of a big new building settling down were underplayed, Blackmore admits. In addition, of course, anti-modern architecture feelings had been stirred up nationally by the Prince of Wales and, by the time it was completed, Lloyd's had become a useful symbol for those who wished to prove that architects could do nothing right. They said it was ugly and backed that up by saying it was too expensive to run and maintain. But Blackmore and Green had known about high maintenance and running costs all along.

"It was known about and identified," Blackmore says, "but the point was that the building gave us a quite remarkable plot ratio. The committee accepted the building would cost money, but the



Underwriting the future with the new Lloyd's: Courtenay Blackmore and Sir Peter Green

value we were getting from the plot made it worthwhile."

The plot ratio is the amount of space in a building relative to the ground plan of the plot. Lloyd's gave 7.5 to 1 compared with 5.5 to 1 elsewhere. In addition, 80 per cent of its space is usable - i.e., not taken up by services - compared with only 45 per cent in the old building. On top of that, Rogers' design allowed Lloyd's either to expand or contract by using any number of floors in the building and letting out the remainder as offices.

Green has now left Lloyd's to run his own company, and Blackmore is semi-retired, though he does advise others on how to run new building projects. They are a contrasting pair. Green calm, methodical and frequently pedantic, Blackmore gruff and direct. Both reveal a lifetime of sitting on committees in their stately narrative style.

"Modern art of any description is much more difficult to understand," Green says. "More simple means of representation have been taken over by the camera. You have to put your thoughts on canvas in a rather different way. Richard is a very strong personality who expresses his art in a very strong way. I think it's exciting."

THE THINGS THEY SAY

- "Lloyd's is a very high quality building but it fails to provide basic human requirements. It is totally inhumane. That design approach is guaranteed to induce a condition of mild clinical psychosis." Sheena Wilson, of Building US Studies, a firm which specializes in investigating user complaints

Who mourns Hirohito?

The Japanese abroad are faced with a dilemma when their emperor dies

Nobuo Sato contemplates the imminent death of his emperor, and says: "You must understand, this is our first experience of such an event." Sato, the managing director of a London-based chain of Japanese restaurants, is not alone in his uncertainty. While Emperor Hirohito fights his lingering battle in Tokyo's Imperial Palace, the 25,000 Japanese nationals living in Britain are trying to decide how they should mourn the demise of a man who, until the end of the Second World War, was considered a living god.

The period and form of mourning for companies is a matter for them and their parent organizations. Black clothing and arm bands may be worn by both men and women but that, too, is likely to be an individual decision. For many Japanese the emperor's death presents a moral dilemma. "I have two feelings," Sato admits. "I am 50 years old and my generation has different feelings towards our emperor than the young generation has."

There has been little official guidance for them and it is more than 60 years since the death of the previous emperor. The Japanese embassy in London envisages a period of mourning, but the precise number of days depends upon advice received from Tokyo. There will, however, be an official book at the embassy in which both Japanese and other nationalities can register their condolences.

The Bank of Japan, which represents the 23 Japanese banks in Britain, is unlikely to declare a holiday as a result of the death. But Masayuki Ishikura, the bank's deputy chief representative in Europe, expects employees may have a few moments of prayer at their desks. "We have to stick to individual decisions on this matter," he says. "Mostly I think it will be a case of abstaining from making a noise."

Ever since Hirohito, aged 87, who ascended the 2,600-year-old throne in 1926, first became seriously ill about three months ago, Japanese organizations overseas have been cancelling functions as a mark of respect. Blocks of seats have been held back until the last minute on flights from London to Tokyo in case a swift return by London-based Japanese dignitaries was necessary.

Nissan, the motor manufacturer, expect to show their mourning in the British style by flying their national flag at their Sunderland headquarters at half-mast. With only 45 Japanese employees out of a staff of 2,000, they do not envisage a great public show of mourning.

The Japan Society of London, which has 1,000 members, has already cancelled its annual dinner and will postpone all other "fun and jollifications" for as long as the embassy advises.

Hideaki Hirano, senior adviser to the managing director, says that the policy is to follow "the British way of doing things", but he believes that some of the employees may choose to wear dark neckties with their regulation navy-blue uniforms.

Sony's chairman, Akio Morita, who should have been coming to Britain at the end of October, delayed his arrival until next April. And the ceremonial openings of Sony's German headquarters and a new tape factory in Italy have also been postponed. In Britain, where the company has only 44 Japanese employees out of a workforce of 2,000, a short period of formal mourning is envisaged.

Presenting a view that more closely fits the foreigner's preconception, Sony's British spokesman envisages a time of reflection "and a period for looking forward to what is a new age". No calendars or diaries have been printed in Japan for the coming year, he explains, "because the future starts with the new emperor".

Sally Brompton

DENON Pure performance comes to Laskys.

Advertisement for Denon audio equipment including C.D. Player, Amplifier, Cassette Deck, and Tuner. Features prices like £299.99 and £124.99, and mentions 12 months interest free.

NEXT WEEK Spectrum goes in search of answers to the problems of the inner cities

Paddy's love story

Awkward though the question may be, it must surely be asked. Is Mr Paddy Ashdown in love with Dr David Owen? Ever since embarking on his leadership campaign for the Social and Liberal Democrats, Mr Ashdown has displayed the lover's propensity for parting the mannerisms and characteristics of his beloved.



CRAIG BROWN

This was evident to an uncanny extent on his political broadcast on television on Tuesday night. Those who switched on accidentally were convinced that here was Mr Mike Varwood making his TV comeback with a satirical impersonation of Dr Owen. As parodies go, it seemed quite excellent: Dr Owen's bluff, non-sense, man-of-the-world approach was reduced to the megalomaniac gurglings of a half-wit and his visionary frown into the middle distance emerged as a particularly acute case of myopia.

Lovers of more zany, off-beat humour are also well served. Tony Britton and Nerys Hughes star in *Has He Been Fed?*, described by its producers as "a role reversal musical comedy for the 1990s". They say that it is the first such series to include a pet dog, and should thus be considered "a milestone in TV comedy".

Bowles and Felicity Kendal in *Dinner's Ready*, a role reversal musical comedy. Jane Asher and Richard O'Sullivan in *Have Your Dose the Shopping, Darling?*, a role reversal marital comedy and Wendy Craig and Nigel Havers in *Your Tie's Not Straight*, described by its writers as "a role reversal marital comedy".

The Great Wall of China strikes different people in different ways. Dr Johnson believed that every man should visit it so that his children might be endowed with the distinction of having a father who had seen the Great Wall. When Lord Northcliffe first caught sight of it, he ordered six bricks to be transported back to England to decorate his garden.

A GREAT LATE GIFT IDEA National Garden Gift Tokens. Having problems choosing presents for friends or family? Give National GARDEN GIFT TOKENS and let them select their gift at any one of our 1500 member Garden Centres and 1000 florists nationwide.

TIMES DIARY SHEILA GUNN

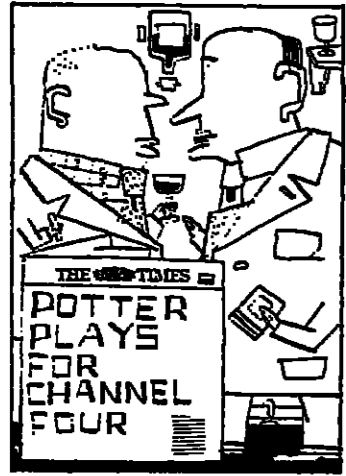
Logic all-party parliamentary groups have had their day. After years of complaints that MPs and peers misuse the respectability...

The doyen of the House of Lords and leader of the Labour peers, Lord Cledwyn, shares the honours this year for the title, 'most impressive peer active in the Lords'...

The Conservatives are now the 'green' party, and that's official. Lord Calthorpe has invited guests to his 'green Christmas party'...

The Lords, chock-a-block with 'broadcasting' peers, is having great fun berating the ideologically inspired government White Paper paving the way for a free-for-all in television...

BARRY FANTONI



'Made Ron's Christmas - he sells old dance band 78s'

Lord Brabazon has been prowling around the House of Lords enticing peers into the back seats of Department of Transport cars for a trip around central London...

The question worrying peers at the moment is: will they keep their cameras? If the contract for televising the Commons goes, as expected, to an independent company...

One face that many Tories - and some Labour peers - hope to see less often is that of Lord Monkswell, the 'Dave Nellis' of the Upper House...

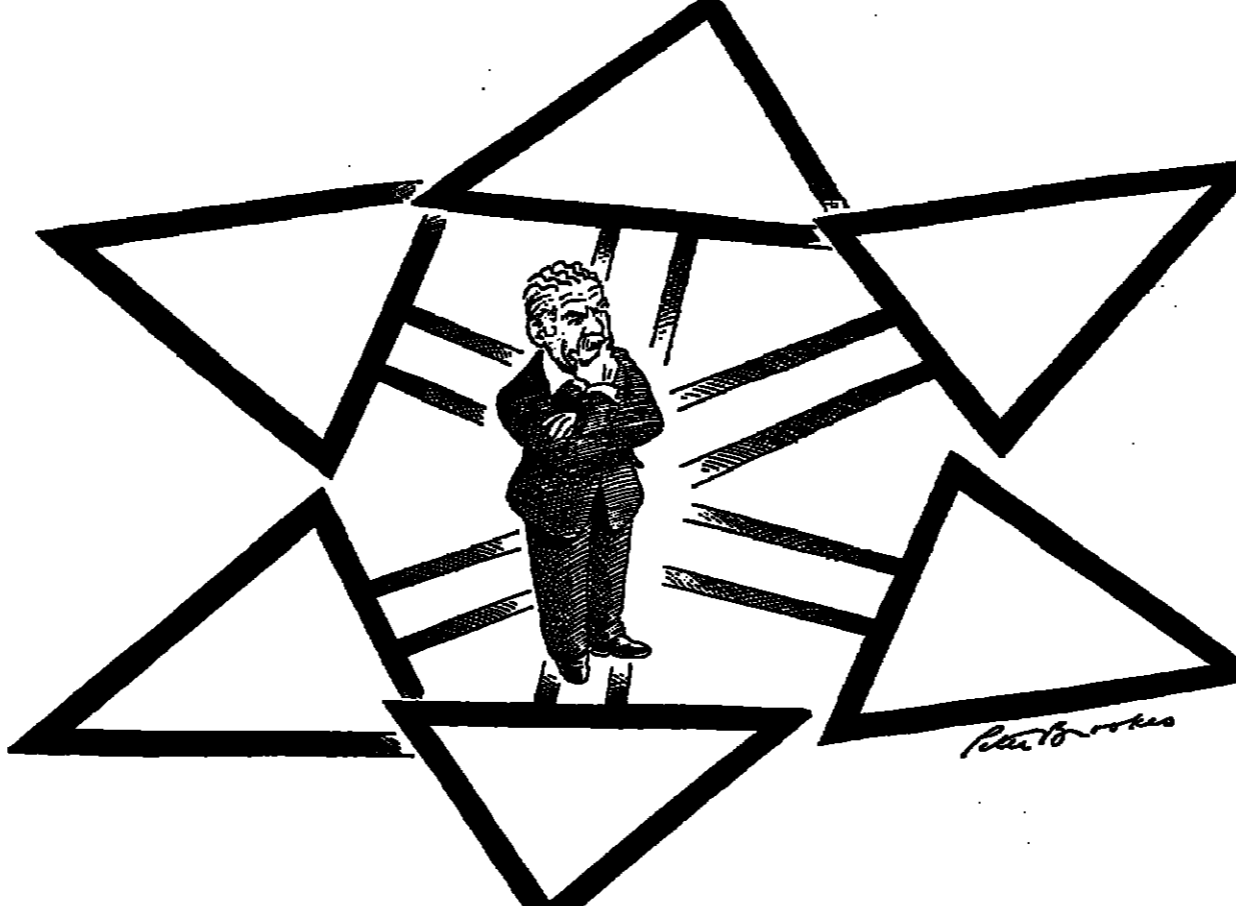
Yoav Biran, Israel's Ambassador in London, expresses his country's distrust of the renewed American dialogue with the PLO; Michael Binyon, below, examines the changes that prompted the US initiative

Sideshow on the road to peace

In the 40 years of its existence the state of Israel and its people have continuously striven for peace. The unchanging Arab response was only too often that of belligerence...

The PLO aims at establishing a PLO-controlled independent Palestinian state. Such a state will be non-viable and intractable. It will become a basis for further terrorism and a base for destabilizing forces endangering peace and security in the area...

Moreover, the declaration of Palestinian independence has rendered even the qualified acceptance of UN resolutions meaningless, as it determines the outcome of the negotiations before they have even started...



'It is sad that energy, resources and emotions are diverted to a sideshow of PLO attempts to gain legitimacy'

Instructions to Katyusha rocket-launcher operators to fire on northern Israel; The torture and murder of two Israeli seamen in Spain in October 1985; The murders of three Israelis, including a woman, aboard a yacht in Larnaca, Cyprus, in September 1985...

Neither an organization nor a person perpetrating and supporting such acts of sheer violence have any place in the Middle East peace process; Israel remains part of the Palestine problem rather than its solution.

Israel regrets the present United States move with regard to the PLO. At the same time I have no doubt that differences of view on this issue will not affect the long-standing special relationship existing between Israel and the US.

It is built on shared values and common interests. Israel has been declared a 'major non-Nato ally' by the US Congress and enjoys special political, economic and strategic co-operation that has proved of benefit to both countries...

Moreover, Israel recognizes the legitimate rights of the Palestinians and accepts their right to participate in the determination of the final status of the Administered Territories. Indeed, Israel believes that, in negotiations with Jordan and the Palestinians, a mutually acceptable mode of co-existence can be worked out...

Why Shultz recast the Middle East equation

Washington. It is an axiom, as true of American politics as elsewhere, that it is best to take the most difficult and unpopular decisions quickly, and at a time when the opposition is least prepared...

George Shultz, the Secretary of State, insists he has not changed his mind. But coming within hours of an apparent categorical refusal to have any truck with the PLO, based on what seemed semantic hair-splitting, his decision has caught everyone off guard.

predicted. And it underlines two important facts about American foreign policy that most people, here and abroad, overlook: first, that even in his final weeks an outgoing president has full authority in this field, and may indeed feel 'liberated' to take controversial decisions...

And he has been told very clearly by both the European allies and by the Russians, in extensive talks about the Middle East, that further delay would jeopardize everything. The US was in danger of letting the whole peace process slip from its grasp...

Most spokesmen have refused to condemn the Shultz decision outright, although they have expressed great wariness and insist that Arafat must be held to his word.

It is far easier for Bush than this reaction because he made now by an administration whose demonstration of concern for Israel's security is above suspicion...

Commentary • ROBERT KILROY-SILK

The short fuse of the law

The editor of The Mail On Sunday, Stewart Steven, wrote in his newspaper last week about the undignified and threatening way in which he was treated by the police in Chiswick...

more. So also would any youth worker, social worker, community worker, probation officer and schoolteacher. Don't editors communicate with such people? Don't they converse occasionally with Labour MPs...

Every one of these groups (along with middle class demonstrators on such matters as changes in the abortion laws) have shown a willingness to employ violence and engage in public disorder to a degree that has sometimes put the football hooligan in the shade...

But let us be clear about this: we have got the police force that we deserve. The way that it operates now and the attitudes that its individual officers display are a response to operational needs, not the product of a warped mind...

ON THIS DAY 1861

eloped since Queen VICTORIA gave her hand in marriage to Prince ALBERT of Saxe-Gotha. It was an auspicious event, and reality has more than surpassed all prognostics...

DEC 16

Prince Albert died of typhoid fever and congestion of the lungs at the age of 42. It was said of him at the time that 'he lived in the treadmill of never-ending business and did not cling to life'.

LONDON, MONDAY, DECEMBER 16, 1981

The nation has just sustained the greatest loss that could possibly have fallen upon it. Prince Albert, who a week ago gave every promise that his valuable life would be lengthened to a period long enough to enable him to enjoy, even in this world, the fruit of a virtuous youth and a well-spent manhood...



1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone: 01-782 5000

CRACK IN THE ICE

With his short press conference in Geneva on Wednesday, Mr Yassir Arafat changed the terms of play in the Middle East. The change may not be permanent but it is no less dramatic for that. Comparisons with Camp David and President Sadat's journey to Jerusalem are premature. But it is not too early to identify that a change has happened — the clearest change yet in the unacceptable politics of the PLO.

Mr Arafat has well chosen his time to go the last mile towards meeting the United States' conditions for dialogue — the acceptance of Israel's right to exist within secure borders and the "renunciation" of terrorism. The speed of the US response testifies to the frustrations which have been building up since the meeting of the Palestine National Council in Algiers last month.

For Washington the transitional period between presidencies is an opportunity for calculated risk. Although on Wednesday only small steps hampered the opening of talks between the US and the Palestine Liberation Organization, there was the fear that, as ever in the Middle East, those steps would never be taken.

Unmodified, Mr Arafat's speech to the United Nations on Tuesday would have headed the PLO back into the limbo of violence in which many of its leading figures wish it to lie. The opening of negotiations at this stage was vital if Mr Arafat was to sustain the fragile pact between PLO factions constructed at Algiers.

It was statesmanship on his part to reject the advice of PLO hardliners and commit himself and the PLO to a peace in which Jews and Arabs would "live and let live". But statesmanship will be hard to sustain without progress towards a state in which to practice it.

The opening of "substantive dialogue" between the United States and the Palestine Liberation Organization does not alter the fact that the dossier for discussion is fiercely complicated. It would be unreasonable to expect an early breakthrough. Even leaving aside the almost insuperable problem of Jerusalem, for both sides the holy city claimed as the capital of their states and the symbol of their national and religious identities, there is barely an inch of frontier which is not sensitive.

Certain pieces of the jigsaw fit more neatly than before the launching, a year ago, of the Palestinian *intifada* in the occupied territories. Most important, Jordan has effectively renounced its claims on and connections with the West Bank, creating a geographical space for the heartland of a future Palestine and prompting the Algiers declaration of Palestinian independence.

But any comprehensive peace settlement would have ultimately to include not only agreement between the PLO and Israel, but other questions left over from the 1967 war such as Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan Heights. The convening, in the near future, of an international peace conference is completely unrealistic.

Before any such conference could be held, let alone succeed, hard bargaining will be needed. The call for it at the United Nations is useful only as an added pressure on the parties directly concerned. Israel's position, as out-

lined on the opposite page, is clear. Although some of the demands are unreasonable (Mr Arafat does not control all the violence of the *intifada*, as the Israelis well know) the key issue at this stage is not whether Israel accepts the PLO's invitations for talks.

The fundamental decision facing Israel is, as the US representative to the UN, Mr Vernon Walters, said in Geneva, whether eventually to withdraw from most of the territory it has occupied since 1967. The United States' task, as mediator, will be to find the difficult formulae by which Israel may detach itself from the West Bank and Gaza on terms which do not threaten its security as a state.

A step-by-step approach is the only one with any chance of success. The first step, which will impose equally stringent tests on Israel and the PLO, would be towards *de facto* self-government in the occupied territories.

In April 1976, Israel permitted the holding of municipal elections in the West Bank, pulling its forces out of the towns while polling took place. The result did not, as Mr Shimon Peres, then Israel's defence minister, had hoped, produce a "moderate" leadership to which Israel could grant a large measure of autonomy.

Israel, which has no ground for expecting victory for its preferred candidates 12 years later, will be reluctant to repeat the experiment — particularly in view of the large-scale Israeli settlement in the West Bank in the intervening years. One of the key questions which has to be answered by the indirect negotiations between the US, the PLO and Israel is whether there is any form of elected, non-Israeli rule for the territories which both sides could accept.

Israel would stand to gain, in the movement towards an orderly transfer of power, from the election of local Palestinian representatives. Mr Arafat has deprived Israel of its alibi for total immobility. The choice for Israeli leaders is no longer whether to look for a settlement, but how.

Mr Arafat would take, in turn, much convincing of the virtue of elections which stopped short of establishing a Palestinian state in a single step. The external PLO leadership has been well aware that it does not control the *intifada*. Mr Arafat would be unlikely to welcome the establishment of an official internal leadership.

The minimum conditions for this initial step towards the "peaceful coexistence" for which Mr Arafat says he aims would probably be, on the Israeli side, a complete halt to its settlements policy; and on the part of the PLO, a serious commitment to securing civil peace in the run-up to elections. For Israel, this could only be possible under a national coalition independent of the extremist religious parties.

Mr Arafat would on his side have to break, unequivocally, with PLO factions still committed to violence. The fact that Mr George Habash, leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, yesterday greeted the opening of direct talks with the US as a "Palestinian victory" is a promising sign.

Even PLO hardliners may be coming round to the thought that talk may be a quicker route to Palestine than fighting.

PROBATION REPORT

Latest figures on the economy are more reassuring than some of late. Earlier this week the Government announced that retail sales last month fell by 0.5 per cent which helped to put the worrying increase of the previous month in perspective. All the reports from high street retailers have been for a rapid slowdown in sales and the official figures now appear to bear this out. News, which in some months would be distinctly unwelcome, is now reassuring when the economy has been growing faster than industry's capacity to produce, leading to inflationary dangers and rapid growth in imports.

Yesterday this better news was supported by other economic indicators. Growth in average earnings fell back in October from 9.25 per cent in the previous month to 9 per cent. This was to some extent expected because of the distortion produced in the figures this time last year by settlements reached with the teachers and local authority workers, but it was reassuring to see some slowing down.

There is now that much less chance of inflationary pressures leading to a reversal of the fall in unemployment. Last month there was no sign of that with the biggest monthly drop in the numbers out of work since July.

There was also slightly better news from revised figures on the balance of payments. More careful estimation of invisible earnings from services than is possible with the monthly figures shows a smaller deficit in the third quarter than originally announced. The size of the deficit remains such that there is little doubt that demand in the economy is too high, but the adjustment is a reminder of the

fallibility of the figures. Even more important is the huge balancing item in the accounts, a statistical euphemism for inaccuracies in compiling the numbers. The imprecision represented by the balancing item is now larger than the entire current account deficit. Some probably represents unrecorded net exports, some capital inflows.

On a longer timescale, the investment intentions displayed in the half-yearly survey conducted by the Department of Trade and Industry show a high level of confidence in industry. Investment is expected to remain strong next year giving hope that the rapid growth in productivity recently can be maintained in the months to come.

A more sustainable set of figures gives some hope that the interest rate medicine is beginning to work. But it is not going to be easy to read the signs accurately during the next few months and formulate policy appropriately. The Chancellor's budget judgement is going to be even more difficult than in previous years, because a large part of the effect of raising interest rates will not be fully felt until after the Budget speech has been delivered. Up to 40 per cent of all borrowers on mortgage only have their rates adjusted once a year and that does not usually take place until April.

Several further pieces of information will become available before decisions have to start being taken. There will be inflation figures published today, next week a new set of trade figures. Policy-makers will be hoping that these deliver an unambiguous message. Meanwhile the present policy stance is still on probation.

Dons' pay talks

From the Vice-Chancellor of Reading University
Sir, University authorities intend to withdraw from the present academic pay negotiating machinery (report, later editions, December 10) because the financial position of too many universities is too fragile to risk the imposition of a pay award which would put institutions in peril.

The universities have confirmed their desire to talk and negotiate, but they cannot do so within a mechanism which embodies compulsory arbitration without any guarantee that the funds needed would be provided.

Talks are continuing. We hope that they will lead to a joint approach by the universities and the Association of University Teachers to Government and to a response which will make it possible to resign and recruit staff.

The increase in average earnings in the country as a whole is about 9 per cent; it is no more than a reasonable request for these staff, but it is well beyond the ability of universities to pay without new money. No offer of 9 per cent was made, or can be made, in the present financial state of universities.

Yours faithfully,
EWAN PAGE (Chairman, University Authorities Panel),
Vice-Chancellor's Office,
The University of Reading,
PO Box 217,
Whiteknights,
Reading,
Berkshire,
December 13.

Noakes and others (December 9). Another view is that a cluster of towers will enhance the townscape in a way that the usually isolated tower blocks of the past have failed to do compare the bitty look of modern London with the dramatic New York skyline.

Few would want the whole of London to be transformed but perhaps a mini-Manhattan on the Isle of Dogs would actually improve the appearance of a hitherto visually desolate area.

In 1987 I put the idea of a balloon (suggested by Mr Adcock, December 13) to the London Docklands Development Corporation and in February, 1988, I was told that the developers were "looking at the possibility of some sort of advertising balloon".

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL GOLDMAN,
1 Lyndale Close,
Blackheath, SE3,
December 10.

Canary Wharf

From Mr Michael Goldman
Sir, The widely felt fears about the visual effect of the towers being built at Canary Wharf are well expressed in the letter from Tony

Irish refusal to extradite Ryan

From Mr Francis Bennion

Sir, The Irish Attorney General, Mr John Murray, was right to refuse the extradition of Patrick Ryan (report, December 14). It pains me to say that, because I have always been bitterly opposed to the IRA as an undemocratic engine of tyranny. They murdered my friend Ross McWhirter; I wrote the "Ballad of Guildford" in anguish at the IRA bombing there, and it was sung in a commemorative television programme.

These things I mention as a reminder that I am not one to condone the wicked and terrible acts of the IRA. I support Mr Murray's decision with a heavy heart, but supported it must be.

Mr Murray gives as his reason prejudicial statements made in Parliament and the media. He says the fact that these were made (and it is a fact) "manifestly and inescapably" means that no direction by the trial judge could be effective in removing from the minds of a British jury trying Patrick Ryan the bias they have created.

Here Mr Murray goes too far: no one can be certain that the judge's direction would be ineffective, and probably it would not be. But a real doubt has been created. The prejudicial statements have contravened a golden rule of British justice, which British lawyers are proud. This, in Lord Hewart's words, is that

it is not merely of some importance that justice should not only be done, but should manifestly and undoubtedly be seen to be done.

There is another important aspect to this matter. In a leading article (December 14) you criticise Mr Murray's decision because it was "a policy decision, and not a legal finding". This is to misunderstand the nature of the Attorney General's unique office in common law jurisdictions. His

duty is to exercise, as an independent functionary of the constitution, the prosecutive power of the State, or power to put persons on trial.

This necessarily involves an element of policy, but it is prosecution policy, not government policy. In my view it was correctly exercised by Mr Murray in this case, much though British may dislike admitting it.

Yours faithfully,
FRANCIS BENNION,
62 Thames Street,
Oxford,
December 14.

From Mr Gerard Harrison
Sir, I am disappointed, like many others, that the Irish Attorney General has not acceded to the request of Her Majesty's Government that Patrick Ryan should be extradited to this country to face charges of terrorism. I cannot agree, however, with Mr Don Joyce (December 8) that designating all Irish citizens who live here as possible aliens would have the slight effect on the fight against terrorism.

Like Mr Edward Heath, I still believe in that great principle of British justice that a man is innocent until proved guilty. If every request by Her Majesty's Government for the extradition of an alleged terrorist is followed by the popular press acting as judge and jury, along with public outbursts from members of Parliament (who should know better), I should be surprised if any of our European neighbours will consent to hand over their citizens whose rights to a fair trial may well have been prejudiced.

Yours faithfully,
GERARD HARRISON,
28 The Towers,
Lower Mortlake Road,
Richmond-upon-Thames, Surrey,
December 14.

Transport troubles

From Mr Lucas Mellinger

Sir, Robert Adley, MP, and Michael Weibman, who address the transport planning problem (December 6) concisely respectively with the suggestions that "politicians... could experiment by seeking agreed solutions" and "the debate must go on and a socially acceptable transport strategy for our urban conurbations found". Surely, necessity now makes more constructive demands.

One single relevant fact intelligently faced will eliminate urban congestion and enhance substantially the economy of this country. It is that cars are grossly inefficient in site utilisation.

A vehicle designed to transport four persons, when in use, carries on average 1.2 persons; efficiency, 30 per cent. It is used on average two hours in 24; efficiency, 8 per cent. It demands national floor space (equivalent to a small bedroom) three times — in the garage, on the road, and at its destination, efficiency, 33 per cent — a cumulative efficiency of less than 1 per cent compared with a vehicle that occupies space according to its need.

Technological successes in other fields, providing for flexibility and for miniaturisation (e.g. the umbrella) suggest that an efficient design project. Whilst the cost of such a vehicle would be greater than current, or rather present-day immobile models, the expense must be set not only against that of delays, accidents, parking, fines and policing, but also against the

construction of giant roadworks which alleviate only local problems whilst a single efficient car, as envisaged, will improve congestion wherever it goes, world wide.

Almost as a by-product of such a British development, our motorcar industry would resume an international lead and demonstrate to hidebound economists that it is not growth alone but relevance that matters.

Yours faithfully,
LUCAS MELLINGER,
4 Kew Green,
Richmond, Surrey.

Checking coaches

From Mr F. W. G. Perryman

Sir, Mr Clarke's complaint (December 10) against the Kent police is singularly ill-directed. He should be sending them his grateful thanks and a donation to the Police Benevolent Fund. They seem to have prevented risk to his life and spared him the likelihood of mutilation in another motorway pile-up.

He states that the reason for the delay to his coach was stated to be that the tachometer showed 60 minutes over the permitted hours. That was in Kent at the start of a return journey to Ilkley, some 300 miles further on, perhaps six hours' night-time motorway driving in the heavy drizzle Mr Clarke describes.

Congratulations to the Kent police for preventing danger to road-users by stopping it at source. Yours faithfully,
F. W. G. PERRYMAN,
Somerset Villa, 4 Somerset Road,
Ealing, W13.

Defending midwives

From Mr J. Lowe and Mr A. J. Evans

Sir, Mr D. B. Garrioch (December 8) has written to you with the apparent intention of supporting the midwives, but his letter will have done more harm than good in the advancement of their status and self-confidence.

In devising the post-"Griffiths" management structures, the managers and professional advisers in this authority have placed increased emphasis on the lead role of the divisional manager (the senior midwife who has statutory responsibility for all aspects of midwifery in both hospital and community as supervisor of midwives).

The sisters are supported by a clinical nurse specialist, who reports to the divisional manager who, in turn, has a professional responsibility to the chief nursing officer — the immediate past-President of the Royal College of

Midwives. The divisional manager enjoys the complete trust and support of the midwives on the staff.

By stating a similar relationship has to exist in all health authorities. Professionalism is therefore maintained to the highest level and does not "disappear" as Mr Garrioch suggests.

Of course, the unit general manager and district general manager apply business principles, but our decisions are firmly dependent upon the professional advice received from the midwifery and other clinical specialists. There is total confidence between line management and the professional midwives in this district.

Yours faithfully,
JACK LOWE (District General Manager),
JOHN EVANS (Acute Unit General Manager),
Tunbridge Wells Health Authority,
Sherwood Park, Pembury Road,
Tunbridge Wells, Kent.

Egg fever

From Mr John Biffen, MP for Shropshire North (Conservative)

Sir, On December 4, Mrs Edwina Currie, a junior health minister, asserted that "most" of the nation's egg production was infected with salmonella. She used the word "most" rather than "some" or "much".

Meanwhile, there has been a fall in egg consumption and the livelihood of many poultry farmers has been adversely affected.

I have looked in vain for an apology from Mrs Currie for her use of the word "most" in respect of alleged salmonella infection of the national flock. It is possible I have overlooked such an apology.

If, however, none has been made and none has been required by the Prime Minister, the situation points to an uncomfortable conclusion. It is that apology is an unfamiliar concept for this Government. Such an attitude fosters the cancer of arrogance. This implies a challenge to the Prime

Minister no less than to Mrs Currie.

If desired, the matter could be happily resolved through the correspondence columns of your newspaper. A little contrition could go a long way.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN BIFFEN,
House of Commons,
December 14.

From Mr D. A. G. Simpson
Sir, Were one of the far-left local councils to pay out a large sum to counter an irresponsible statement by one of its own members the action would be roundly condemned and possibly lead to legal action on behalf of the ratepayers. What redress has the unfortunate taxpayer for the proposed Government expenditure of £500,000 on publicity to repair the damage caused by Mrs Currie's pronouncement on eggs?
Yours faithfully,
DAVID SIMPSON,
7 Wingfield Street, SE15,
December 15.

A helping hand for Mr Gorbachov

From Mr Richard S. Rowntree

Sir, The conjunction of the notable and tragic events of December 7 provides an important opportunity for the exercise of statesmanship. President Gorbachov's speech to the United Nations placed the concept of sufficient defence firmly on the world political agenda.

The Armenian earthquake has served as a horrific reminder of the urgent need for the organisation of resources on a world scale to combat disasters, whether natural or partially man-made, of famine, flood, earthquake or tornado.

East and West both share the urgent need to halt the excessive diversion of vital resources to military purposes and the common danger of the advanced defence technology becoming so implanted into the economic and political systems as to be virtually out of the control of any country's leaders.

Though there can be no quick or simplistic solutions to the immensely complex problems of disarmament, there is an urgent need for imaginative measures to demonstrate the link between expenditure on defence and the basic requirements of society.

The aim must be to foster both the necessary political will and the required public patience for the inevitably lengthy negotiations essential for the achievement of disarmament with security.

One positive measure would be an initiative to establish a permanent United Nations disaster fund and unit with an agreement that all member states should make an initial contribution by means of a common percentage cut in their national defence budgets for the coming year.

The actual formulation of a proposal of this kind in direct response to the events of last week would give new hope and impetus to the vital but necessarily slow process of world disarmament.

Given the present interregnum in Washington and the Prime Minister's now unique position as the most experienced world statesman with a special personal relationship with both the United States and Soviet leadership, would it not be timely for Mrs Thatcher to consider tabling such an initiative?

For it would surely represent a valid exercise of practical idealism of the kind for which the Prime

Earthquake protection

From Dr P. W. Allen

Sir, In the aftermath of the Armenian earthquake it was useful that your Technology Correspondent and Mr David Swinbanks have both described (December 13) some methods currently favoured by engineers to provide buildings with some protection against earthquakes.

It is doubtful whether either of the two methods noted are the best possible. Opting for a "structure that remains as rigid as possible" may enable the building to survive intact, but its very rigidity will aggravate the effect of the earthquake on the contents of the buildings.

There is no point in contriving that a hospital or other emergency services building is undamaged, if all the equipment in the building is wrecked. The Japanese proposal to use computer-controlled mechanical devices to offset the forces generated by an earthquake, while ingenious, seems complex and is certainly costly.

There is another method: "base isolation" — in which the building is supported by specially-designed rubber blocks on a rigid base. This

system, which is relatively simple and cheap, can protect not only the building but also its contents, and therefore appears to meet all requirements for a practical earthquake protection system.

An example of the use of this system is provided by a recently constructed law centre, situated in the San Andreas fault in California. In October, 1985, shortly after its completion, this building was subjected to a modest (4.9 Richter) earthquake. Measurements made of the forces within the building during the earthquake showed that these were reduced, as predicted, and the building, together with its contents, would undoubtedly have survived an earthquake of greater magnitude.

Although this method is known to many earthquake engineers, its merits should be more widely recognised, especially since it is specifically adaptable to the types of buildings favoured in less-rich countries, where most earthquakes occur.

Yours allen,
P. W. ALLEN (Secretary),
The International Rubber Research and Development Board,
Chapel Building,
Berkendonbury, Hertford.

It became clear that traditional methods were not working, we had to take more decisive steps. I doubt that we would have received much support if we had taken the action before trying the more usual, and on the whole successful, means of support.

Ilea has contributed in full measure to the debate on how to improve quality in schools. "Self-seeking" though you may consider it, let me just mention three examples: the primary language record, warmly praised by the Cox committee on English teaching; the schools-industry compact, now being promoted nationally by Norman Fowler; and our graded assessment work, which is now being extensively used in the establishment of a national assessment system as part of the new national curriculum.

There are many other examples, as anyone trying to give a balanced report would have acknowledged. Yours faithfully,
DAVID MALLEN,
Education Officer,
Inner London Education Authority,
The County Hall, SE1,
December 15.

From Mr Lawrence Bethune
Sir, Where Mr Woodhouse was wrong (letter, December 8) you rely on Mr Salteena in *The Young Visitors?* Chapter 2, "Starting gaily", begins: "When the great morning came Mr Salteena did not have an egg for his breakfast in case he should be sick on the journey."

Yours faithfully,
LAWLESS BETHUNE,
All Saints Cottage,
Queens Road,
Alton, Hampshire,
December 12.

From Mr C. D. Elston
Sir, Your leader today (December 15) refers to confusion as to where Government responsibility lies for a code of practice in the keeping and feeding of hen-laying eggs. With biological — and terminological — mutations of this magnitude, a state of confusion seems hardly surprising.

Yours faithfully,
C. D. ELSTON,
Highfield, 23 Grassmere Avenue,
Harpden, Hertfordshire.

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C. D. ELSTON,
Highfield, 23 Grassmere Avenue,
Harpden, Hertfordshire.

From Mrs K. McDonald
Sir, The game count in our garden this morning was one roe deer, five pheasants, six partridge in amongst two newly-planted Conference pears. Should this give rise to a new Christmas verse?
Yours faithfully,
KATE McDONALD,
Footwood House, Fontmell Hill,
Iwerne Minster,
Blandford, Dorset,
December 5.

Letters to the Editor should carry a daytime telephone number. They may be sent to a fax number — (0117) 252426

THE ARTS

For a beautiful lady

Mstislav Rostropovich was six when he first arrived in Moscow with his family, penniless and with nowhere to stay.

Mstislav Rostropovich plays a benefit for Armenia tomorrow, sponsored by The Times. He tells Bryan Appleyard that the links go back to childhood

grown around the large, classic Russian vowels which he brings to his version of English. He is prone to giving massive bear hugs.

He left the Soviet Union with his wife - the soprano Galina Vishnevskaya - and two children in 1974. His crime was the public support of the writer Solzhenitsyn.

Four years later he was stripped of his citizenship, an event that led to a celebrated press conference at which he wept tears of rage that some mere politician could rob him of his home.

Before I left I was popular musician in my country. Then in the books it just said about me that I entered some music competitions, but I was stripped of citizenship because I made damage to prestige of Soviet Union.

Of course, communist Russia has made a habit of driving out its greatest talents, so it could have been no surprise that it decided to insult and reject one of the world's greatest musicians.

When Chaliapin died there was some obituary in Izvestia. It said when he left Soviet Union he did not make anything significant... he was very bad artist. Then, after 34 years, they dig up

his bones and move them after great ceremony at the Bolshoi Theatre. Now he is all right, now he is great hero.

Even more crass was the instant rehabilitation of Andrei Tarkovsky, Russia's finest film-maker since Eisenstein, who died in exile. "When he died, after one hour and 15 minutes a cultural attaché called his widow asking her to return to Moscow with his body to make national funeral for the people. She would not do it, of course. But I have one question about this: why did not this cultural attaché call one hour and 15 minutes before he died? Not for the people, for Tarkovsky?"

Rostropovich himself remains stateless and has no official contact with the Soviets. His condition for returning or even speaking to them is simple. "Until now, Russian people think I am a traitor and I am only in West to make money. Still my name is forbidden. If the Government make official explanation to my countrymen that this is not true, then I am clean, then I speak with these people."

"Of course, communism is the problem. But I do not say Russia must not be communist or any other 'ist. I just ask that they confess their lies. At school I learned of some virus that was half between plant and animal. I think Gorbachev is producing something that is half-way like that - not communism. Now in Soviet newspapers you see many articles that criticize; I'm proud of

that, that's free. But I do not know if they ever change what they say about me."

So far, the most that glasnost has given him was the opportunity last year to play a series of concerts with Veronica, who was allowed out as the summits grew more friendly. But Rostropovich believes the Armenian tragedy, horrific as it is, may do more to draw the iron curtain than any number of summits.

"It is a great disaster, of course. But all countries are helping and the Soviets are accepting - before, they did not do that. That is first good step because the Soviet people must find in the West are human beings, not animals."

"Another good side is... you know the Hans Christian Andersen story about the naked king - the Emperor's New Clothes. Yes, Eggs-ack-ly! The West comes and they see the Soviet Union has no clothes. But that is very positive because they see how the Soviets are weak and vulnerable. It is better if the West know this."

For Rostropovich and for many others, the Armenian disaster evokes not the Russia of communism, but of melancholy emigrant memories. These are small, human narratives like that of Zinaida, the beautiful Armenian. One memory in particular, of life in that cramped Moscow flat, comes back to Rostropovich.

One day a man called on Zinaida, much to the annoyance of her husband Valentin, who sat in a corner in jealous anger. For some reason, Rostropovich remembers, his father went to the piano and played a tango called "Stronger than Death". He leaps to his feet and plays the rather violent piece on the small upright in his flat.

"That's it! Valentin dislike this man. Yes, Eggs-ack-ly! All my life I remember this! And I remember that man's face - I think that's



Devastatingly vivid: Rostropovich has now made his home in London

CONCERTS Fully in keeping

Des canyons aux étoiles... Queen Elizabeth Hall

The great trilogy of Messiaen's late large-scale works was completed by a blazing, high-gloss, high-pressure performance of Des canyons aux étoiles... with Paul Crossley as the flurrying yet incisive bird-pianist and Esa-Pekka Salonen encouraging the London Sinfonietta towards glory.

It has been a rare and reeling pleasure to hear this work in the near company of its two colossal neighbours. La Transfiguration and Saint Francois. It has surely also taught us something - not so much about the majestic scale of Messiaen's creative genius, which has long been clear, but rather about the interconnectedness of his world.

To give just one example, the awesome knocking rhythm of the angel in the opera turns out to have its parallel in something Messiaen heard from the mockingbird, and put into the piano solo that is the ninth movement of Des canyons. There must be many other cases of "composed" ideas being in fact transformations of sounds from nature, because for Messiaen the categories are not distinct: the inner and the outer worlds are in perfect conformity, and it is entirely right that birds and angels should sing the same songs.

On Sunday in the same place we heard his most recently performed work, Un vitrail et des oiseaux, written in 1986 and combining in its substance as in its title two of his principal enthusiasms: medieval stained glass, which has its sonorous equivalent in its richly complex but always clear, vibrant chords, and again birds. Lasting just eight minutes, it belongs with the Petites esquisses d'oiseaux of the previous year in what may perhaps become a series of late works marked by utter simplicity.

Here the birds sing in just three different sorts of short choruses, scored for a trio of xylophones with woodblock and cymbal resonances, for an ensemble of 16 woodwind, and for a solo piano with an increasing number of woodwind soloists (two, then four, then six), overlaid in independent tempos as in the independent concert of Saint Francois, though of course on a reduced scale. The three groups are each heard three times, interweaved with slow refrains in which a trumpet leads an orchestration for wind and bells of the chorale from the "Communion" of the organ cycle Messe de la Pentecôte.

This is where the stained-glass harmonies are to be found, but they appear too in the blackcap's song for full woodwind, like swirls of colour glimpsed as a wing flicks back in flight. These passages were very beautifully realized in the performance by the Ensemble InterContemporain under Pierre Boulez. Yvonne Loriod, inevitably, was the bright and active chief bird in the colour-glass aviary.

John Higgins

Paul Griffiths

Flight to freedom

TELEVISION

Even when the blast of war was sounding in their ears, correspondents invariably commented on the extraordinary beauty of Vietnam. The impact of Peter Gill's report on the Boat People for This Week (ITV) was softened by the sight of tranquil paddy-fields and calm seas set with emerald islets along the exquisite northern coastline.

Poverty in such landscapes did not seem unbearable. I suspect any Wormwood Scrubs inmate would readily have volunteered to change places with Boat People who had been caught and jailed in Vietnam; they were seen in clean blue uniforms performing physical jerks in the sunshine before returning to white-walled cells.

The most compelling visual representation of horror was the footage shot in Hong Kong, in a derelict factory now used to house Vietnamese refugees. Here they might expect to live for four years while their cases were assessed. They were caged like battery chickens, prey to despair and

disease, in conditions which have been condemned by the United Nations.

Peter Gill should perhaps receive an award for seasonal good taste for avoiding the phrase "no room at the inn", although the officials of the overcrowded state of Hong Kong made it clear that this was their view of the situation.

The documentary commented that the flow of refugees from Vietnam has increased dramatically in the past year, and that now those who risked death to leave came from the established communities of the North rather than the South. Bad harvests were mentioned, but a convincing explanation for the new exodus was missing.

Also omitted was the kind of inspiring talk of freedom which an American report would surely have featured. In this respect the programme confirmed that Britain no longer sees itself as a champion of liberty, and that the emigrant fleeing oppression can no longer automatically count on official British sympathy.

Celia Brayfield

Happy ending to a British first

OPERA

Christmas Eve Coliseum

David Pountney is not a man to stay in a rut. After treating Hansel and Gretel last year as a fable of childhood deprivation, and turning Traviata earlier this season into one of male piggery, what was going to become of Rimsky-Korsakov's Christmas Eve? A story of oppressed peasantry?

Not at all. In this snazzy staging, the Ukrainian rustics are drunken and greedy, the priests are lecherous, the boy wins his girl and the Devil does not by any means get all the best tunes.

Rimsky's operas have an uncertain place in the repertoire here. The Golden Cockerel, his final stage work, is given an occasional and welcome airing. The Snow Maiden, which has a few elements in common with Christmas Eve, was played by the ENO in its distant Sadler's Wells days.



Edmund Barham (left) and Cathryn Pope (right) with John Connell

Pountney's production of Christmas Eve is reckoned to be the first professional staging here.

The brush strokes of Christmas Eve, both musical and dramatic, are bold and clear. It is a fantasy of witches, demons and tsarinas which is totally East European in flavour: a work which points in the future direction of Prokofiev's Love for Three Oranges or Janáček's Mr. Brouček. Sue Blane dresses it in equally bold colours, bright reds and midnight blues,

and the spirit of Chagall hovers over her Ukrainian town. Or rather, toytown.

The suitor Vakula arrives at the court of the Tsarina to beg a pair of her slippers, which is the price demanded by the girl he wants to marry. This is the scene that caused Rimsky some trouble with the censor before the first night in St. Petersburg in 1895: members of the imperial family should not be represented on stage. Pountney shows no more of the Tsarina than

a gloved hand, a hem of her dress and two enormous slippers. Anne-Marie Owens (as the Tsarina) booms at Vakula through an off-stage megaphone, thereby completing a notable comic double as Vakula's mama, who is also a part-time witch.

Edmund Barham, as the bushy-bearded, red-smocked Vakula, sang like a full-throated Dimitri from Boris, a Mussorgsky joke to match Pountney's Tchaikovsky jokes at the palace. Cathryn Pope was properly haughty as Oksana, the girl who has to be pleased, although Rimsky might have given her a stronger aria in the last act. Pope is developing into one of our nearest and surest young sopranos.

The stage is filled with ripe characterizations from old hands, led by Nigel Douglas (The Devil) and Edward Byles (The Priest). All thoroughly tasty, if unsubtle. Christmas fare of the more digestible slavonic variety, whipped into shape by the conductor, Albert Rosen.

John Higgins

Paul Griffiths

THE CRITICS ACCLAIM... TOM STOPPARD'S GEM OF A PLAY... "INVENTIVELY SUCCESSFUL... "MASTERLY IMPECCABLE CAST... "WITTY, INGENIOUS, CLEVER... "REMARKABLE... BRILLIANT, TRICKSY, MERCURIAL - STOPPARD AT HIS MOST ENTERTAINING... "NON-STOPPARD LAUGHTER... TOM STOPPARD'S ARTIST DESCENDING A STAIRCASE... DUKE OF YORK'S THEATRE

DANCE

Cinderella Covent Garden

Once upon a time - well, 40 years ago this month to be exact - Sadler's Wells Ballet premiered its first specially created three-act production, Ashton's Cinderella. Very few of the dancers performing that work at Covent Garden this Christmas were even born then, and only one of them took part in the original production, Leslie Edwards, now promoted from a walk-on role to playing the heroine's father (which, it must be admitted, is still not much more than a walk-on role, however genially he plays it).

Pantomime wins

Is he the only member of the cast, I wonder, who can remember when this Cinderella was a mysterious and romantic work, in strange, subversively beautiful designs by Jean-Desiré Malcè?

Somewhere along the way, someone at Covent Garden made the decision to have new designs, looking more like a traditional English pantomime, and the damage that did was exacerbated last year by a further revision making it look more lavish but also more genteel and more banal.

Somewhere under all that expensive flimflam, poor Ashton's wit and poetry lie hidden.

Even the slapstick showed through only intermittently at Wednesday's revival by the Royal Ballet, in spite of heavy clowning by Michael Coleman and Derek Rencher as the step-sisters.

There was consolation however, in Fiona Chadwick's debut as Cinderella. The costume in the kitchen scenes particularly suits her, bringing out a wistful prettiness, and she dances with more spirit than we have seen lately, showing a pleasing happiness at the ball. We can assume that later performances will not repeat the way things went temporarily adrift in her balances and turns at the end of the big duet.

Jonathan Cope has an imposing appearance as the prince, and shows an assured strength in his solo. Not much scintillation elsewhere in the cast, however, except for Tracy Brown as the fairy godmother and Simon Rice as the jester. As the Royal Ballet now goes on to a solid diet of nothing but this and Romeo and Juliet for the next two months, one must hope that some of the alternating casts will put more sparkle into the action.

Mark Ermler, guest conductor for all performances of Cinderella, could help there. His opening account of Prokofiev's music was steady but unexciting. This is Prokofiev's best long ballet score; it would be nice to hear it played with more imagination.

John Percival



Wistfully pretty: Fiona Chadwick

Strong singer lacks polish

ROCK

Rick Astley Wembley Arena

Rick Astley sang Nat King Cole's "When I Fall In Love" early in the show. Wearing a sober dark suit, white shirt and tie, he began the song seated at the very top of the multi-tiered stage set. As he descended a row of twinkling steps, like a character in a Busby Berkeley movie, so the schmaltz factor spiralled in the opposite direction. The response from the predominantly female crowd was agitated. Primary school tots stood precariously on their seats waving their hands frantically, girls barely in their teens screamed vociferously, while the mums watched indulgently, perhaps recalling earlier experiences at the hands of David Cassidy or similar. It was a peak of excitement which Astley never quite reached again. Within moments of finishing the song he had dashed off to change into a garish salmon pink jacket, and the stage, which was

dominated by a huge video screen set in the middle, was once again lit up to resemble a giant toy box.

The video was the source of many visual pranks as Astley "stepped in" to the recorded action on the screen and then "re-emerged" in the flesh with some souvenir of his exploits. The cheerfully unpretentious stunts showed a recognition of his audience's needs, although the singer's limited ability to handle even such a sympathetic crowd as this betrayed a lack of experience. His attempts at getting a singalong going fell remarkably flat.

While there is much of the boy bimbo in Astley's image and songs, it would be a mistake to dismiss him as a puppet-like extension of the Stock/Aitken/Waterman production team. His rich, characterful singing voice was entirely convincing in performance and he sounded mature beyond his years, especially when reaching with effortless accuracy for notes in the lower register. His eight-piece band and three backing singers performed with élan, lending warmth and charm to the electro-pop arrangements.

Above all, Astley demonstrated the timeless ability to carry a good tune, irrespective of style. He still has much to learn, but no matter how quickly his current pop appeal dissipates, that is not a quality which will go out of fashion in the long term.

David Sinclair

NOEL COWARD'S HIT COMEDY EASY VIRTUE "a triumph" D. Mail MUST END JAN 7 Box Office: 01-379 6107 or 01-349 7200 29th July. No Mag for GARRICK THEATRE

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There... How to... pense... Spare a... Christmas... discover...

FRIDAY PAGE

'There is a price tag for surviving 5,000 years of history'

The assignment for last Sunday's TV-am was fairly straightforward. "Choose a couple of the stories in the Sunday papers that you think important," said producer David Higgins as he reeled me in. After eggs and earthquakes, the double-page feature in the Sunday Telegraph headlined "The Jews and Mrs Thatcher" interested me the most. But it posed one problem. Something about it made me feel uneasy. Sitting between David Frost and the Observer's editor, Donald Treford, I stuttered away on television unable to pin down the reason.

with the basic premise of the piece: namely, that Jews are a distinct and separate group who are not merely separated by their religious faith, as English Roman Catholics might be, but by their very ethnicity. It doesn't matter if Mrs Edwina Currie chooses not to regard herself as a Jew (as this article informs us) or whether Nigel Lawson has the requisite number of Jewish parents or grandparents is labelled and defined by their Jewishness — no matter what they do and regardless of their individual choices. It does not matter how long one has been in the country, practised its customs, even joined its established church; one remains a Jew. This is not anti-Semitism, but it is the first step towards making a lot of people very uncomfortable by giving them a separate identity within their own country and it is profoundly disturbing to many Jews who think of themselves exclusively as English.

Anti-Semitism, or indeed anti-anything, comes from looking at certain human characteristics, associating them with a group and expressing them in terms of a group — such as noting in this article that Orthodox Jews are less likely to drink and more likely to commit fraud. Actually, every bit of analysis becomes potentially negative once one is

group-thinking, even if the characteristics listed are positive. That is why it is racist to say that blacks have rhythm.

What gives this article its particularly unpleasant flavour is the question it poses after listing the high proportion of Jews in Parliament (19 times their proportion of the population). "Does this constitute a special interest which could be a danger to the realm?" asks author Anthony Blond. For my money, it does not matter whether the answer is negative (as in this case: "No, because Jews are incapable of acting in concert.") or not. This insidious question is a straw dog. It would not occur to anyone to ask if groups defined by, say, their blondness or Mancunian birth are a threat to the realm — because it is clear that a person's blondness is irrelevant and specious when it comes to this matter. Why would this question have been posed about the Jews unless they are regarded as a separate group whose very separateness



BARBARA AMIEL

may be a potential threat?

"Why was this article written?" I asked lamely on TV-am. My answer should have been that it proceeds either out of stupidity or a cynical desire to cash in on a controversial subject or straight anti-Semitic malevolence. Myself, I think it is a mixture of the first two. It is also possible, I suppose, that there is a vague political motive on the part of the author which by associating Margaret Thatcher with Jews taps into the latent streak of British xenophobia. The very fact of identifying people as potential aliens and associating the Prime Minister with them could serve as a political statement.

As to why Mrs Thatcher has so many Jews around her, I speak, I suppose to the further question of why so many Jewish thinkers and activists are prominent in the forefront of any Zeligist movement. Historically, Jews seem to have had a great ability to detect what is blowing in the wind long before other

groups, whether we are speaking of Christianity, the emergence of the bourgeoisie, the various socialist movements or indeed the current neo-Conservatism.

In one sense, of course, Jews do expect the impossible. It is very difficult to maintain a distinction throughout the ages and at the same time demand that people not notice it. It may be that most of us who are Jewish wish this were of no greater interest than the town of our birth. But we cannot have our cake and eat it.

In spite of our great desire to assimilate we have always had as well, I think, a great desire not to. This ambivalence is based not on any lack of profound loyalty but rather on the commonsense instinct that the assimilation of a tiny group into the larger one means extinction. There is a price tag for surviving 5,000 years of history.

Towards the end of the TV-am discussion, Donald Treford observed that "it was brave" of the Sunday Telegraph to do the article. I do not know what one can do or say about an article that manages, for example, to attack Sir Keith Joseph on grounds that he is "a patrician, the second baronet, Harrow and Magdalen, a good war, tall, dark, handsome and rich" except that I am

inclined to think it shows little but petty meanness and envy.

I do understand that there is a nervousness these days when it comes to writing about minority groups. It is true that charges of racism or anti-Semitism get thrown about with reckless abandon, sometimes over anything that irked a person. But while "brave" may be accurate in describing the will to publish something controversial, it is a meaningless word when trying to determine the intellectual or moral merit of what it said. To use the word "brave" in this context, though, does tell us something: it is a subconscious acknowledgement that the article would scare, hurt or irritate a number of people precisely because of the terms in which they were evaluated.

But in the final analysis all one can do — and should do — about such articles is live with them. Freedom includes the right to hold silly opinions and, as far as I am concerned, the right to hold and voice anti-Semitic ones provided their owners do not intend to translate them into murderous or exclusionary activities. There is no straight line leading from the assumptions behind this article to Birkenhau. They may lead to less enthusiasm for our kind at White's or Boodles, but that is a price we can willingly pay.



1948: Queen Mary holds her great-grandson

Taking to water

It must be more than 10 years since I went to a christening. The congregation

consisted almost entirely of family and friends (most of whom fell into the "hatch, match and dispatch" category of churchgoers) and after the god-parents had duly renounced the carnal desires of the flesh on behalf of the infant, everyone went to the parents' home to celebrate in the traditional manner with a slice of christening cake and a glass of champagne.

Last month Emma Sara Davies, aged five months, was christened at St Mary's church in Worpleston, Surrey — along with nine other infants. Each christening party sat in its own section of the church and parents, god-parents and babies were called to the font in rotation.

Although Emma's nearest and dearest also returned home to celebrate, there have clearly been changes beyond the substitution of the Alternative Service for that in the Book of Common Prayer.

Despite what some clergy call the conveyor belt approach, the number of infants being christened has been declining for some time. In 1900 there were 564,000 infant baptisms carried out within the Church of England, — 65 per cent of live births. By 1986 the number had dropped to 188,000 (30 per cent).

Today, many parents, even those who were themselves christened as children, see no reason to have their babies baptized. As Lesley Abbott, an accountant from London, says: "If I have to fill in forms then I put down C of E. But

Will Princess Beatrice's baptism be no more than empty tradition?

I'm not sure whether I still believe, and neither my husband nor I go to church. My daughter, who is six, goes to a church school where she is being taught about Christianity. If she wants to be baptized when she is old enough to make her own decision, then that will be up to her."

Carole Carter, who lives in Hertfordshire and has two children aged two and four, admits that one of the reasons she wanted a christening was for the rest of the family. "It was a matter of form. I do believe it is important for every child to feel he or she belongs to a religion."

The Church itself is only too aware of the mixed motives of many parents, but few clerics are quite so outspoken as the rector who told Carole that far too many christenings were "an excuse for non-believers to meet in church so that they could then go off to drink champagne and have a piece of fruitcake?"

Indeed, when Carole's husband, John, admitted he had been unable to swear that he believed in God, the rector refused to go ahead. So Carole was forced to shop hastily around for a more accommodating clergyman. She found one. "He was lovely," she says. "We explained what had happened and he told us that even if my husband couldn't love God in the face because he wasn't sure if he believed in Him, it didn't mean our son couldn't be accepted into the Church."

Attitudes within the Church of England vary enormously. In some parishes parents will be asked to attend church for a number of weeks, or go to meetings in the evenings to discuss baptism. They may find their own faith under scrutiny — or the question might not even arise.

At Christ Church in North Finchley, London, the curate, Andrew Pavlibey, objects to people "using the church for certain rituals which they think have some kind of superstitious element". Under canon law, he says, parishioners can insist on baptism — "but usually when I go through the service with them and explain that unless parents are firm in their own faith it would be a pretty meaningless exercise, most people change their tune."

The Rev Stephen Terry, vicar of St John the Apostle in Whetstone, a neighbouring parish, believes it is not his business to judge the parents. "Why should we penalize the baby for the delinquency of the parents? If there is even a faint spark of recognition of a God who loves us, then we should work on that spark."

Officially, vicars are encouraged to hold christenings in the middle of an ordinary Sunday morning service but some may be happy to hold a special service on a Sunday afternoon, either for one family or several at a time.

Within the Church there is actually some debate as to whether infants should be christened at all. It is not just wishy-washy one-time C of E parents who think that the children should make their own promises if and when the time comes.

And on practical grounds there seem to be few advantages to a christening. The current view appears to be that no unbaptized child would be refused entry to the Kingdom of Heaven on those grounds alone.

Anyone living in any parish can insist on being buried in the churchyard (if there is room), baptized or not, and even getting married in church may be possible. Some vicars require both parties to have been baptized, although it is only necessary for one of the two, and some vicars will delicately desist from asking to see any proof.

You cannot, however, take communion because for this you need to be confirmed. And you cannot be confirmed unless you are baptized first. In view of all this, it is not surprising that the numbers of older children and adults being baptized is rising — in 1980 they totalled 40,000, in 1986 they reached 45,000.

Even so, there are many who do not want to see the christening tradition vanish. Gerry Evans admits she is not a regular churchgoer but she has had all four of her children christened. She says: "I felt it was the right thing to do." Or as Stephen Terry says: "It leaves the door ajar. It makes it easier for a child to walk through later."



1982: the Princess of Wales with Prince William

How to cope with the expense of being wealthy

Alarming news. Apparently the rich are not getting richer, after all. The cost of a £100,000-a-year lifestyle is actually inflating faster than the national average expenditure: the things rich people buy are rising in price much faster than the things poor people buy. It is all proved in a painstaking survey made for Harpers & Queen in its January issue by former senior government statistician Owen Nankivell, and written by David Hume. Whereas the ordinary Retail Prices Index is based on a household with £178 a week to spend, the Harpers Index is based on £1,923 a week. The average household spends £28 a week on food, £8 on alcoholic drink, £13 on clothes and shoes, £25 on taxis and cars; the Harpers household spends £135, £96, £173 and £243 a week respectively.

Spare a thought for the poor rich this Christmas. A Harpers & Queen survey discovers that more money buys less

often appear very tight-fisted. After all, despite our alleged single-figure inflation it is a shocking fact that grouse shooting has gone up by 20 per cent and champagne consumption by 12 per cent in the last year. Mr Hume, in putting his finger on this misery, is clearly the General William Booth of our times. One must not mock. Of course, one could pick a few holes in his scenario: anyone bright enough to earn £100,000 a year ought to be able to devise a cheaper way of getting the ironing done than by equipping a sullen teenage Swede with her own room, telephone and car while all the children spend 75 per cent of the year at boarding-school. But it is Christmas, and I for one am overflowing with seasonal goodwill to all men, even ones in Porsches. With the help of a few comfortably situated friends, I can offer the following tips on living within your Harpers income.

The best thing to do would be to move. It is far cheaper to be the richest person in a middling area than the poorest in a rich area. Take your little daughter's pony: on a £200 fell pony she could impress her peers mightily in one area, yet be eyed with contempt 20 miles further down the M4 because it is not a £5,000 show pony. Equally, a slight move down-market in terms of area makes domestic help much

cheaper. One company wife in the North-east of England brags loudly to her old neighbours in Surrey that instead of the iniquitous £4.50 an hour, her car only wants £5.50, and besides, "I can get away with giving her really, really cheap powdered coffee". On the other hand, her children — who were at a very smart Oxfordshire comprehensive — have now been shipped off to boarding-school to avoid developing any distressing accents.

If you will not move, then perhaps you could consider adopting a fashionable, even Thatcherite, "Green" political profile. This would enable you to downgrade all the cars so that you use less petrol, and lead-free to boot; a few choice speeches about the waste of fossil fuels at dinner parties would also enable you to turn down the central heating without disgrace. If you could manage to combine this Green awareness with a certain foggyish Victoria-and-Albert-Museum arty personal style, you could give up buying all those tiresome new clothes from Harvey Nichols and concentrate on 1920s flea-market rags, which are still much cheaper. Thanks to an ancient quirk of the English class system, not only can men with beautiful accents get away with very old, greenish suits, but a woman in a tatty 1892



Computer-plan your new kitchen FREE... and take home the plan and a bottle of champagne with Magnet's compliments.

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- Free kitchen computer-planning
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- Free Draw: the winner receives up to £50 of free groceries each week for a whole year.
- Free glass of wine
- Free balloons for children



INFORMATION SERVICE

This selective guide to entertainment and events throughout Britain appears from Monday to Friday, followed in the Review section on Saturday by a preview of the week ahead. Items should be sent to The Times Information Service, PO Box 7, 1 Virginia Street, London E1 9XN

BOOKING KEY
★ Seats available
★ Returns only
(D) Access for disabled

THEATRE

LONDON

★ CAN-CAN: Uninspired revival of Cole Porter's Paris musical. Strand Theatre, Aldwych, WC2 (01-636 2860).
★ A CHRISTMAS CAROL: Jon Strickland as Scrooge in David Holman's adaptation for children and for grown-ups.
★ HUMPTY DUMPTY: New theatre opens with Bobby Crush in the old tale written and directed by Gerald Moon.

OUT OF TOWN

CROYDON: ★ Rolster Dolter: Vince Fodall rigs the old comedy for Christmas; braggarts and brawlers meet their just deserts.
MANCHESTER: ★ The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn Musical version by Roger Haines with Paul Ryan as the first boy-hero to smoke a pipe.

FILMS

Also on national release as Advance booking possible
★ AU REVOIR, LES ENFANTS (PG): Louis Malle's moving, autobiographical drama, set in a provincial boarding school in the last months of the Second World War.
★ BIG (PG): Tom Hanks plays the child turned grown-up in the latest role-reversal comedy from Hollywood.

TOP FILMS AND VIDEOS

LONDON:
1 (1) Who Framed Roger Rabbit
2 (2) A Fish Called Wanda
3 (3) High Spirits
4 (4) Willow
5 (5) Scrooged
6 (6) Bird
7 (7) Midnight Run
8 (8) Au Revoir Les Enfants
9 (9) The Land Before Time
10 (10) Good Morning, Vietnam

Shaw to end in tears



The production of Electra now previewing at the Pit brings together two leading female talents of the Royal Shakespeare Company: Deborah Warner, director of King Lear at Stratford and Titus Andronicus, returning for one last weekend at the Pit in the New Year; and Fiona Shaw (left) who plays Sophocles' murderously mother-hating heroine. Shaw's recent theatre work has been exclusively for the RSC: Celia in As You Like It and a pained despairing Tatyana in Phaedra's Love.

OTHER EVENTS

1988 OLYMPIA INTERNATIONAL SPECTACULAR ANNUAL DEMONSTRATIONS OF EQUILIBRIUM SKILLS OF THE HIGHEST ORDER.
★ IOLANTHE: Kath Warner's handsome and witty G and S production for Scottish Opera dominates the festive season in Glasgow.

DANCE

★ CINDERELLA: Ashon's production for the Royal Ballet. Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London WC2 (01-240 1068) 7.30-10.30pm, £1-£27.

GALLERIES

MADEIRA STRIBBERG: On Fridays this gallery's artist-in-residence opens her studio to the public from 8.30pm. The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2 (01-639 3321).
★ THE SHOW QUEEN: Shirley's adaptation of Hans Anderson's story, for Sadler's Wells Theatre, Rosemary Avenue, London EC1 (01-278 8916) 7.30-10.20pm, £2.50-£9.50.

WALKS

THE BURIED CITY - LONDON: "WALK WITH THE STREET": meet Blackfriars tube, 11.30am, £3 (01-837 4281).

ROCK

★ BROX: Three Gaze twins and the other, Bright as shiny, little buttons. Brighton Centre, Brighton, Sussex BN1 1PH (01-273 202881) 7.30pm, £2.50.

CONCERTS

LUNCHTIME
★ DAVISON/RPO: Arthur Davison conducts the RPO in such bonbons as the Can Can from Offenbach's Orpheus in the Underworld.

JAZZ

★ ALAN BARNES: With guitarist Dave Cliff in the line-up, the duo player's repertoire of hard-bop with a twist of Coltrane Hawkins.

OPERA

★ AIDA: Philip Prowse designs and directs for Opera North's powerful production; Clive Trimm produces, and the cast is led by Janice Cairns, Sally Burgess and John Treloven.

SENELE: Royal Opera House production in English by Charles Mackerras, with Yvonne King in title role.
★ BOULEZ AT THE BARBICAN: Major retrospective of Boulez's work in seven concerts, three conducted by the composer.

BOOKINGS

FIRST CHANCE
★ CANTON OPERA: British premiere of Chinese Opera company, as part of London's Year of the Snake celebrations to welcome the Year of the Snake.

LAST CHANCE
★ ENGLISH CATHEDRALS: Drawings of 26 medieval cathedrals of England by Dennis Croft, who travelled over 10,000 miles by caravan to draw them.

CAROL SERVICES
★ CAROL SERVICES: Available to carol services, published on Monday, contained some inaccuracies. The correct details are as follows:

CINEMAS
★ CANTON OPERA: British premiere of Chinese Opera company, as part of London's Year of the Snake celebrations to welcome the Year of the Snake.

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 1747

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down.

WORD-WATCHING

WOT THEE DICKEYS
★ MICK NICKY: brother in Nicholas Nickleby. A stationer and keeper of a circulating library of the Tottenham Court Road.

WINNING MOVE

The above position is taken from the game between Cochrane (White) and Staunton (Black) played in London 1842. Black plays and wins. The winning move will be given in tomorrow's Times.

ENTERTAINMENTS
CONCERTS
AID ARMENIA
EARTHQUAKE DISASTER COMMITTEE
MSTISLAV ROSTROPOVICH
The world's greatest cellist plays BACH CELEO SUITES at the CENTRAL HALL, WESTMINSTER

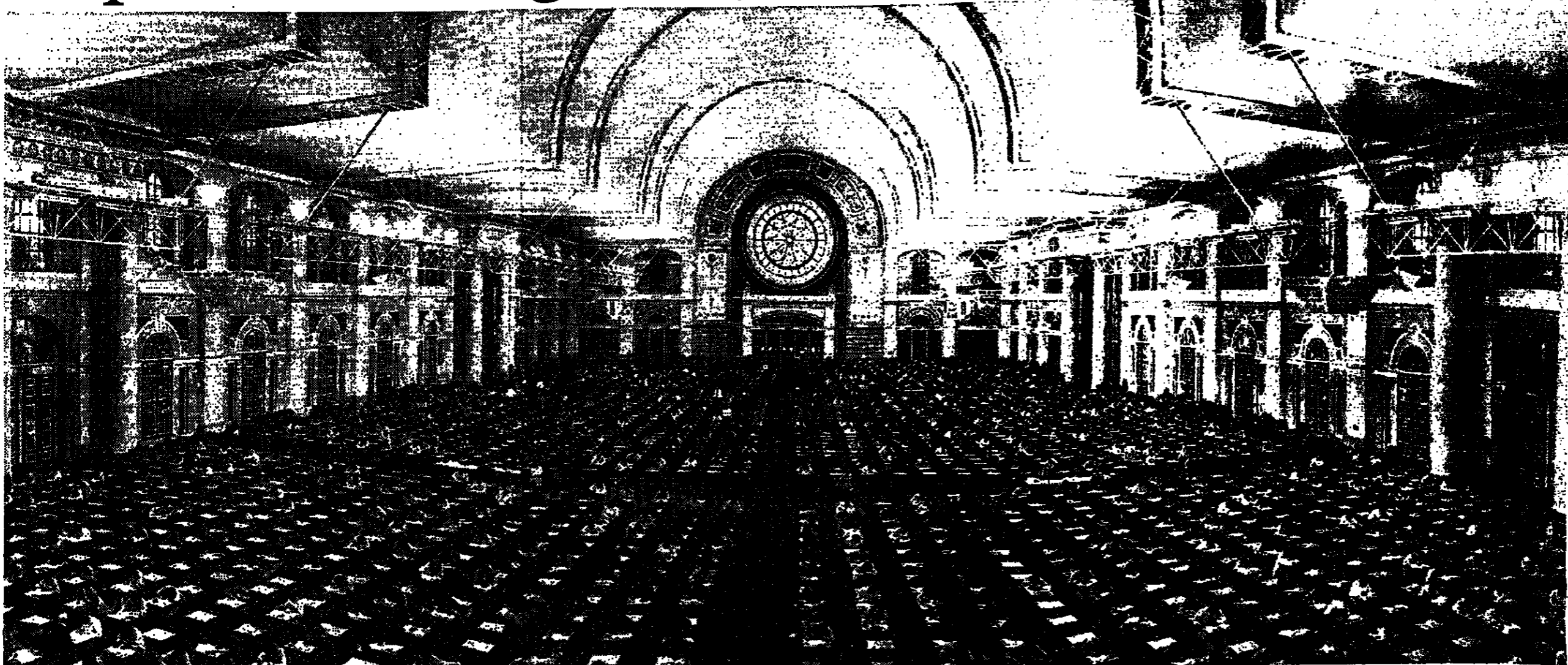
WORD-WATCHING
WINNING MOVE
CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 1747
SOLUTION TO YESTERDAY'S CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 1746

THEATRE
LONDON
OUT OF TOWN
FILMS
TOP FILMS AND VIDEOS

CONCISE CROSSWORD NO 1747
WORD-WATCHING
WINNING MOVE
THEATRE
LONDON
OUT OF TOWN
FILMS
TOP FILMS AND VIDEOS

Large vertical advertisement on the right side of the page, featuring a cartoon character and various promotional text.

A palatial setting for 3,000 aspiring accountants



Nearly three thousand aspiring accountants undaunted by the surroundings of Alexandra Palace in north London yesterday as they sit for the professional examinations set by the Chartered Association of Certified Accountants.

Egg producer to sue Currie for damages

Continued from page 1

The United Kingdom Egg Producers' Association.

Under consideration are proposals for the Government to restore equilibrium by "buying in" surplus eggs.

Before the recent scare began Britons were eating 30 million eggs a day; demand has fallen by between 50 and 60 per cent.

Also under discussion is the industry's call for the voluntary culling of flocks infected with the salmonella bacteria, with sums paid to the producers for each bird lost.

The legal action against Mrs Currie came as the anger among Conservative MPs and

ministers over her remarks intensified.

Ministers are privately calling for her dismissal and in his letter Mr Biffen criticizes both Mrs Currie and Mrs Thatcher over the fact that no apology has been made over her remarks.

If no apology has been made and none required the situation points to the uncomfortable conclusion that apology is an unfamiliar concept for the Government. "Such an attitude," he writes, "fosters the cancer of arrogance."

In the Commons Mr Neil Kinnock, the Labour leader, said the £500,000 being spent on the advertising campaign

was too little to repair the damage to the egg industry and too much to spend to save the face of Mrs Currie.

Mr Macgregor, who has spent much of the past week in Brussels at European Community meetings, has discussed with his colleagues the measures they have taken to control salmonella.

The minister's overriding aim is to control the spread of the bacteria, advise the consumer against avoiding infection and restore confidence to the industry.

Industry leaders feel that the Government's campaign will do no more than contain the damage. They will con-

tinue to press for millions of pounds in compensation for farmers whose businesses have been devastated.

The limited slaughtering facilities at packing stations, normally used for hens which have outlived their laying period, are stretched to capacity.

Officials of Rentokil, the pest control firm, are to meet the National Farmers' Union, the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals and the British Veterinary Association today to discuss ways of dealing with the problem.

Gassing with hydrogen cyanide is normally permitted

only in exceptional circumstances, such as an outbreak of fowl pest, and can be used only under veterinary supervision.

Only limited stocks of the gas are kept in reserve. Rentokil said that the extent of the demand for the firm's services would not be known until today.

Mr Stephen Vincent, chairman of the British Poultry Federation, welcomed the Government's publicity campaign, but said it alone would not save hundreds of bankruptcies and thousands of redundancies.

Parliament, page 12
Letters, page 15

Matter of mistaken identity appears to be on the cards

Political sketch

It is now plain that the Government has decided to bring in a system of compulsory national identity cards. You will not read that, of course, in the parliamentary report on other pages of this newspaper, for reporters write down what is said. But sketchwriters can report what is meant.

What the Home Secretary said on Thursday — to Labour's Alistair Darling — was that the Government, not yet convinced of the case for identity cards, had requested a view from the police. Answering Andrew MacKay (Conservative, Berks E) he agreed that some people had suggested a voluntary scheme.

But what did he mean? Well, the police, of course, now support identity cards. The Government's new Police and Criminal Evidence Act makes street-corner questioning of suspects a procedural right which no young constable — and few law professors — could possibly walk. "Could I have your ID for a moment, Sir, just to run it through our computer?" is the obvious solution. So, after the inevitable thumbs-up from the police, there will be a voluntary scheme.

It will soon become apparent that voluntary schemes fail to embrace the very types whose IDs we'd most like to check. At about this point the Home Office will come clean. They may need to wait for a terrorist bombing. To be against ID cards will be "to support the IRA". It is only a matter of time.

It is probably too late to resist, yet there is just the slimmest chance that the thing can be stopped. But do Labour have the necessary sense of self-sacrifice? Can they swallow pride in exchange for a real prize?

You see, only if the Labour Party supports identity cards, will those Tories who are now wavering, dare to admit their doubts.

The Labour Left has for years held one great lever over the Tories. Yet there is little sign that it understands how deeply Conservatives need Labour, to define for them what they

don't believe. For they fail to realize that Conservatives share no coherent political philosophy, save a gut-hatred of socialism and a determination to oppose whatever it is that socialists try to achieve. This explains why the Tories are still in a rage against socialist ideology despite every indication that socialism poses no possible further threat. They need it desperately. They cannot admit that it is dead. For it identifies — for them — what they are: they are not socialists, you see.

That is why their anti-EEC movement (a secret majority) has never taken off because Labour are anti-EEC. That is why farmers, and Ulstermen, enjoy socialist levels of subsidy: because the Left don't like farmers, or Ulstermen. That is why Enoch Powell was never able to detach the Party from the independent nuclear deterrent. Imagine a Britain where the NFU had amalgamated with the NUM. Tony Benn championed Ulster's cause, and Ken Livingstone wanted the British Bomb. I can hear the Tory ladies chanting "Troops out!" already.

So Mr Hattersley's duty is plain, though he may never be honoured for it: a major speech: "Clear socialist commitment to a Social Identity Card... obvious advantages... one simple PIN number, photo-pass and magnetic strip... interlinking of computers with Social Security, VAT and Inland Revenue... and the banks... no more multiple-applications for shares... no more evading of National Insurance by employers... simple to bring back exchange-control over foreign currency transactions... in fact, all transactions... All in all: "A potent yet civilized way for the State to place the firm hand of civic responsibility upon the shoulder of each and every citizen!" I can just see the darkening faces of the Tory backbenches, as Mr Hattersley splutters onward. Go for it, Roy!

Matthew Parris

New drug in cancer fight

Continued from page 1

The new treatment from Charing Cross is known by the acronym Adept — which stands for antibody-directed enzyme pro-drug therapy — and will be done in two stages.

Patients will be injected with two substances, but at 24 hours apart. The first consists of a special purpose monoclonal antibody, which is coupled to a very unusual catalyst that is a microbial enzyme called carboxypeptidase G2.

The enzyme is made by a process perfected by the Centre for Applied Microbiological Research, at Porton Down, Wiltshire. The cancer-seeking antibody is used as a vehicle to deliver the enzyme to the tumour. Later, the inert

pro-drug is injected. When it meets the enzyme in the cancer cells, the pro-drug is rapidly converted into a cell-killing agent, benzoic acid mustard.

The other advance, reported in the *Lancet* by scientists at the Nobel-prize winning MRC Laboratory of Molecular Biology, Cambridge, said that a retired professor, aged 67, and a woman suffering from cancer of the white blood cells were now out of hospital.

Dr Mike Clarke, of Cambridge University, said: "We have got these patients into remission."

"We are not saying it is a cure, but all the cancer cells we could see have been de-

stroyed. The significance of that is very great."

The researchers said they were also optimistic that the new treatment could be used in future to treat many other disorders apart from leukaemia. The scientists said: "The effects in the first patients were far superior to the results of previous chemotherapy and radiotherapy (X-rays)."

The new humanized magic bullets, or antibodies, called Campath, helped the patients' own immune system to recognize and destroy cancer cells.

Their dangerously low resistance to ordinary infections was also boosted by the treatment at Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge.

792 trains ignored red light, BR report says

Continued from page 1

trend of Spads" but revealed that independent reports by Derby Research and the Royal Holloway College have been commissioned to establish "what is going wrong".

The report, by Mr Maurice Holmes, British Rail's director of safety, was presented to the Railway Industry Advisory Committee, in September.

Mr Holmes is chairman of British Rail's internal inquiry into the Clapham disaster which is expected to end today.

The report categorizes Spads into cases involving "misjudgement, misreading or disregard" and adds that the "major contribution to the

rising trend is misjudgement".

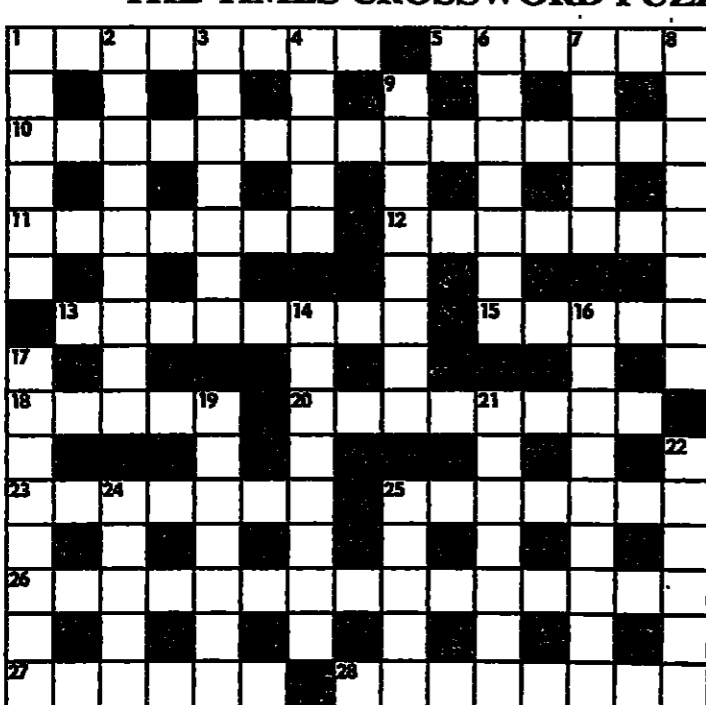
The report says some trains fitted with a three-step braking system are up to eight times more likely to pass signals at danger.

British Rail has plans to alter the three-notch system to seven-notch, but Mr Holmes "believes much work still remains to be done to identify further causes".

Union officials want the board to drop discipline charges against drivers who have passed signals.

The disciplinary action taken against drivers can be a warning, a downgrading leading to reduction in pay, or dismissal.

THE TIMES CROSSWORD PUZZLE NO 17,854



- ACROSS**
- 1 Railway expert allowed to form a band (8).
 - 5 Conditional backing by a second firm results in failure (6).
 - 10 Drama of Shaw's brief holiday in home by river (10,5).
 - 11 Road or rail carrier offers through passage (7).
 - 12 Lilac is no good in an Asian republic (7).
 - 13 Flag for vessel crossing river (8).
 - 15 In Scotland, a drink originally offered to a poet (5).
 - 18 Spooky Eastern Lake (5).
 - 20 Clubman freely ran riot around centre of Newcastle (8).
 - 23 A traveller isn't commonly employed to improve the decoration (7).
 - 25 Team leader in a bad mood? The devil he is! (7).
 - 26 Possibly Fairfax's main part in a real disaster (15).
 - 27 Making an effort like the 1st Baron Jeffreys (6).
 - 28 Full complement of vigour (8).
- DOWN**
- 1 Remain on hold, and mind your manners! (6).
 - 2 Welsh lake rising over flower of translucent whiteness (9).
 - 3 Directions so accepted make us show eagerness (7).
 - 4 Sort of bird to repent going topless! (5).
 - 6 Fashionable woman with sex appeal has to succeed (7).
 - 7 Nurse holding raise up to scorn (5).
 - 8 Speculator looking after connections in the exchange? (8).
 - 9 Language of a holy man seen about in Sark, perhaps (8).
 - 14 Unite, say, with the enemy living near the sea (8).
 - 16 Alarming when a bird swallows half of it! (6).
 - 17 Worn out mine upholds the law almost to the end (8).
 - 19 Omission in pronunciation made by priest on mountain (7).
 - 21 Search in anger when pouch decoration is hidden (7).
 - 22 Bishop managed church office, though not the main one (6).
 - 24 Fish for Bess's man? (5).
 - 25 The principle of evicting people from a rented flat? (5).

WORD-WATCHING

A daily safari through the language jungle. Which of the possible definitions is correct? **WOT THE DICKENS**

By Philip Howard

MORTIMER KNAG
a. A stationer and librarian
b. The usher at Dotheboys Hall
c. A crooked financier

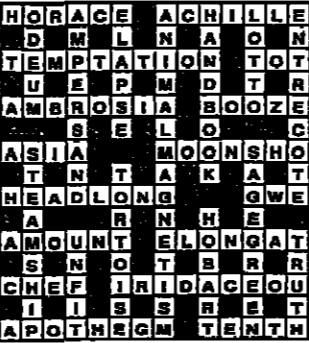
MR SOWERBERRY
a. Gresham's schoolmaster
b. Enemy of Edwin Drood
c. An undertaker

MR CHADBAND
a. A Kenilworth hop-grower
b. A hypocritical clergyman
c. A steady friend of Magwitch

MR NAMBY
a. Best friend of Mr Marston
b. A Sheriff's officer
c. Amy Dorrit's lawyer

Answers on page 20

Solution to Puzzle No 17,853



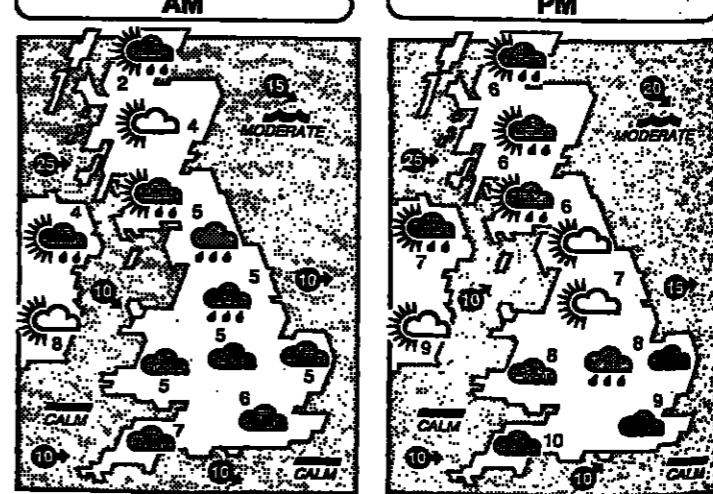
WEATHER

Early cloud and rain over central and eastern Scotland and the Borders clearing southwards. Cooler, showery weather spreading from northern Scotland with snow over mountains. Southern England dry, with bright intervals after early fog. A little rain after dark. Outlook: chilly with night frost. Wet, windy in far north; sun, showers in the south.

ABROAD		AROUND BRITAIN	
Temp	Wind	Temp	Wind
Algeria 13	SE 10	London 10	SE 10
Alexandria 14	SE 10	Manchester 10	SE 10
Athens 14	SE 10	Edinburgh 10	SE 10
Bombay 28	SE 10	Belfast 10	SE 10
Buenos Aires 12	SE 10	Cardiff 10	SE 10
Calcutta 28	SE 10	Exeter 10	SE 10
Cairo 17	SE 10	Gloucester 10	SE 10
Colon 26	SE 10	Leeds 10	SE 10
Copenhagen 10	SE 10	Liverpool 10	SE 10
Havana 24	SE 10	Newcastle 10	SE 10
Harbin 10	SE 10	Nottingham 10	SE 10
Hong Kong 24	SE 10	Sheff 10	SE 10
London 10	SE 10	Stirling 10	SE 10
Lyons 10	SE 10	Truro 10	SE 10
Madrid 10	SE 10	Wolverhampton 10	SE 10
Moscow 10	SE 10	Wrexham 10	SE 10
Paris 10	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10
Rangoon 28	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10
San Francisco 10	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10
Singapore 28	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10
Sydney 20	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10
Tokyo 10	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10
Yokohama 10	SE 10	Wye 10	SE 10

HIGH TIDES		THE POUND	
Time	Height	Bank	Rate
London 11:30	11.8	Australia \$	2.215
London 11:30	11.8	Canada \$	2.215
London 11:30	11.8	France F	16.66
London 11:30	11.8	Germany DM	2.36
London 11:30	11.8	Italy L	2.00
London 11:30	11.8	Japan Yen	160.0
London 11:30	11.8	Switzerland Sfr	2.00
London 11:30	11.8	USA \$	1.51

AM PM



LONDON		MANCHESTER	
Temp	Wind	Temp	Wind
10	SE 10	10	SE 10
11	SE 10	11	SE 10
12	SE 10	12	SE 10
13	SE 10	13	SE 10
14	SE 10	14	SE 10
15	SE 10	15	SE 10
16	SE 10	16	SE 10
17	SE 10	17	SE 10
18	SE 10	18	SE 10
19	SE 10	19	SE 10
20	SE 10	20	SE 10
21	SE 10	21	SE 10
22	SE 10	22	SE 10
23	SE 10	23	SE 10
24	SE 10	24	SE 10
25	SE 10	25	SE 10
26	SE 10	26	SE 10
27	SE 10	27	SE 10
28	SE 10	28	SE 10

HIGHEST & LOWEST		YESTERDAY	
Temp	Wind	Temp	Wind
10	SE 10	10	SE 10
11	SE 10	11	SE 10
12	SE 10	12	SE 10
13	SE 10	13	SE 10
14	SE 10	14	SE 10
15	SE 10	15	SE 10
16	SE 10	16	SE 10
17	SE 10	17	SE 10
18	SE 10	18	SE 10
19	SE 10	19	SE 10
20	SE 10	20	SE 10
21	SE 10	21	SE 10
22	SE 10	22	SE 10
23	SE 10	23	SE 10
24	SE 10	24	SE 10
25	SE 10	25	SE 10
26	SE 10	26	SE 10
27	SE 10	27	SE 10
28	SE 10	28	SE 10

BUSINESS ROUNDUP

Electra Investment tumbles to £9.7m

Electra Investment Trust, which specialises in investing in small companies, has unveiled a fall in pre-tax profits from £16.46 million to £9.7 million in the year ended September 30.

Adler's son takes over

Mr Rodney Adler, aged 28, right, has replaced his late father, Mr Larry Adler, as chief executive officer of FAI Insurances, but declined an offer to become chairman of the group.



Arthur Lee up 45.8%

Arthur Lee, the Sheffield steel and plastics manufacturer, reports a 45.8 per cent increase in pre-tax profits for the year to end-September from £4.13 million to £6.03 million.

More interest in T-Line

Thomson T-Line, the Venetian Pools group on the end of a hostile 80p-a-share bid from Leadbroke, has confirmed that another, unnamed party has spoken of the company, although no timing has been discussed.

French buy for Tyzack

Mr Bill Eastwood's WA Tyzack group is buying Eurofitec, a French filter manufacturer and distributor, for FF118.2 million (£10.9 million).

Speedy Stakis plugs profits drain

The recent foray into the financial services field by Stakis could have impinged sharply on profits. But its swift disposal of the businesses, including that of Robert Wigram, the loss-making stockbroker, to Midland Bank's Greenwell Montagu last month helped to staunch the losses.

As a result overall pre-tax profits came out 28 per cent ahead at £24.5 million for the year to October 2, 1988, a clear £2 million ahead of some estimates.

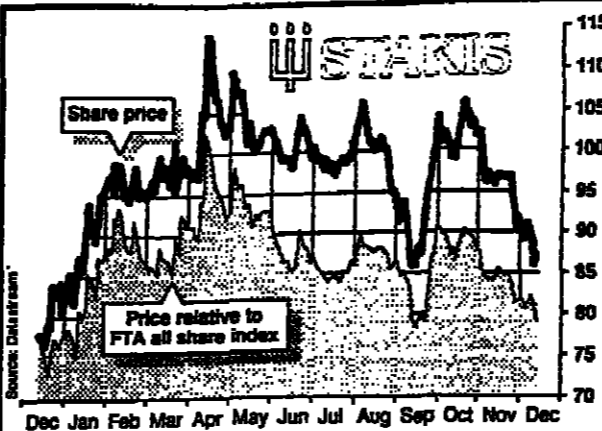
Apart from £478,000 charged as an extraordinary item to cover the closure of the tour-operating and financial services businesses, the remaining four divisions all showed profits improvement.

The group's core, hotels and inns, chipped in 65 per cent of overall trading profit at £17.2 million, up by 48 per cent from £11.6 million in 1987. There was a £1.48 million contribution from hotel sales but Stakis's lack of exposure to the expensive London hotel market, which has suffered this year, undoubtedly helped the improvement.

The casino division, which made £5.7 million against £4.4 million, also benefited from its provincial base. Printers outside the capital played, ate and drank regularly at Stakis's tables while the competition suffered from the departure of the high rollers from the London gaming scene.

ALPHA STOCKS

Table with columns for stock names and prices. Includes entries like ADT, Abbey, Am-Lyons, etc.



document before deciding whether to accept.

Not only is the preliminary statement thin on financial detail, but the 140p is well below what would have effectively been received had the original Carless marriage knot been tied.

Ryan Int.

Ryan International, which in October was jilted by Carless Capel, is back at the altar. This time its hand is being sought by Digger, a company specially formed to stage a management buy-out, which is courting the independent coal producer with an on-and-off-cash offer at 140p a share.

co) looks unlikely. This time, Ryan should make the altar.

Bardon Group

Five pence invested in Bardon Group, the quarries and building products company in 1977 - when it was first listed on the Over-the-Counter Market - would now be reappearing on the Stock Exchange as 168p, as Bardon makes the jump to a full listing.

No new shares are being issued by Bardon, which has patently outgrown the O-T-C with a market capitalization of more than £135 million, and profits last year of £7.3 million.

In an attempt to shake off the O-T-C image, Bardon drives to market in style, accompanied by SG Warburg and Cazenove. But that does not mean that the company is without blemish.

Down among the small print in the back of the listing particulars, there are some potentially worrying potential litigations in the US, where Bardon purchased Gnyott, a quarry owner, for \$100 million (£54.5 million) this year.

influenced by acquisitions and the arrival of Mr Peter Tom, the new chairman and chief executive, profits at Bardon have grown rapidly, from £3.71 million to last year's £7.3 million.

In the half-year to September 30, urged on by the Guyott purchase, profits surged to £8.4 million and analysts are suggesting £11 million for the full year to March.

That would underpin the flotation price with earnings per share of 18p for a prospective price/earnings ratio of nine, which looks dramatically expensive compared with Beazer standing at about six times next year's earnings.

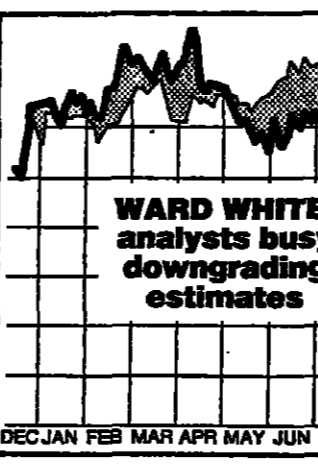
So while Bardon may still have growth in plenty ahead of it, there is no need for investors to fight for a share of the action in current markets. Beazer has an excellent record, fuelled by acquisitions which have in turn damaged the share price. Everyone who wants a Beazer share can have one.

Bardon could well be heading down the same road, and so while the shares may have a certain scarcity value at the moment, it would be surprising if Mr Tom is not tempted into using Bardon paper, with its new-found status. One to watch, but not to buy until the rating subsides a little.

STOCK MARKET

Mountleigh shares up to 168p as takeover talk intensifies

Speculation over the future of Mountleigh, Mr Tony Clegg's property group, intensified last night when its shares suddenly jumped to 173p in hectic dealings on talk that the company would today be the subject of a 200p-a-share offer from British Land.



A late denial from Mr Ritblat of any such plan prompted some profit-taking, but the close was still 12p higher at 168p as dealers remained convinced that an answer to the Mountleigh mystery was close.

improved steadily to close at 145p, for a premium of 5p.

Shares of Embassy Property, the Midlands-based group, placed on the Unlisted Securities Market at 190p by Neilson Milnes and JS Gadd, opened with a discount of 8p at 182p, but rallied to finish at 185p, a discount of 5p.

Planning, Research & Systems, an information services business trading worldwide, also made a disappointing start on the USM.

Ever since Tuesday's report that the Galerias Consortium, the Italian-backed group led by Mr Peter Earl, the financier, had decided not to take up an option to acquire a further 7.3 per cent of Mountleigh, thus keeping its stake to 13.9 per cent, dealers have been uneasy.

Galerias acquired the stake in the first place in order to strengthen its arm in negotiations with Mountleigh as it tries to acquire its European interests which include Galerias Preciados, the Spanish department store chain. The market had this week been expecting the talks to reach a conclusion, but Galerias decision not to take up its option has baffled everyone.

Dealers have been suggesting that the consortium could even launch a full-scale offer for Mountleigh, but recent suggestions in the market are that Mr Clegg has had meetings with Mr Ritblat and the Beckwith brothers of London & Edinburgh Trust and would rather transact a deal with them.

An answer to the puzzle

looks imminent. One good outside bet must be Beazer, the mini-conglomerate, which last year launched an audacious bid for Storehouse.

Mr Paul Bloomfield, the man behind Mountleigh's past property deals, recently took a 20 per cent stake in Beazer and could possibly be lining up a bid for the property group himself.

Of the four new issues which made their stock market debuts, only one closed with a premium over its placing price. It is Secure Trust, the financial services group which draws 58 per cent of its turnover from a household budgeting service. Placed on the main market at 140p a share by Charterhouse, the merchant bank, its shares

per cent was largely discounted and the market took heart from the slow-down in wage inflation.

The volume of business again left a lot to be desired as Christmas festivities took their toll, but the FT-SE 100 share index closed 7.1 points higher at 1,763.2. The narrower FT 30 share index ended 3.1 points up at 1,427.3. Gilts firmed £4.

Amstrad, Mr Alan Sagar's electronics group, rose 5p to 155p. Yamachi International (Europe), the Japanese securities house, forecasts pre-tax profits of £180 million in the current year against £160 million last time. It believes that the shares are on an absurdly cheap rating for a group with such an outstanding record. Video production is now up and running with no further problems.

increase in the West German Lombard interest rate to 5.5

WALL STREET

Table with columns for Dec 13, Dec 14, Dec 15, Dec 16. Lists various stock indices and prices.

Dow edges up in early trade

New York (Reuters) - Wall Street shares were mixed with blue chips little changed in early trade yesterday. The Dow Jones industrial average was up 1.95 to 2,136.20.

Frankfurt (AP-Dow Jones) Shares ended slightly lower ahead of the Lombard rate increase to 5.5 per cent from 5 per cent which came too late to affect the market. The Commerzbank index, calculated at mid-session, was down 15.6 to 1,592.1.

Tokyo - Shares closed weaker, with the Nikkei index ending at 29,705.75, down 48.98.

JAPANESE GOVERNMENT 6% STERLING LOAN 1983/88

Table with columns for Dec 13, Dec 14, Dec 15, Dec 16. Lists various stock prices.

CANADIAN PRICES

Table with columns for Dec 13, Dec 14, Dec 15, Dec 16. Lists various stock prices.

Geoffrey Foster

Following the DIVIDEND DECLARATION by the Company on 13 October 1988 NOTICE is now given that the following DISTRIBUTION will become payable on or after 16 December 1988.

Gross Distribution per Unit 3.00 cents Less 15% U.S.A. Withholding Tax 0.45 cents

2.55 cents

Converted at \$1.8725 £0.013618157

Claims should be lodged with the DEPOSITARY: National Westminster Bank PLC, Stock Office Services, Second Floor, 20 Old Broad Street, London EC2, on special forms obtainable from that Office.

United Kingdom Banks and Members of the Stock Exchange should mark payment of the dividend in the appropriate square on the reverse of the certificate.

All other claimants must complete the special form and present this at the above address together with the certificate(s) for marking by the National Westminster Bank PLC. Postal applications cannot be accepted.

DATE: 9 December 1988.

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This is the commitment to the industry that has made us undisputed market leader.

Providing you with true value and real quality.

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Vertical advertisement on the right edge of the page, partially cut off, mentioning 'profit with' and 'Ford'.

Sterling strength hits API profit with worse feared

By Wolfgang Münchian

Associated Paper Industries, the papermaking and film conversion group, has joined the list of companies worrying about the high interest and exchange rates and their potential impact on profits.

Announcing the results for the year ended October 1, during which API improved earnings per share from 22.6p to 25.8p and pre-tax profits from £7.8 million to £8.1 million, Mr Charles Rawlinson, the chairman, said: "The situation is particularly critical for API with its high level of exports."

With exports running at 30 per cent of sales, he added: "We continue to place great

emphasis on exporting, especially to continental Europe, and are well placed to take advantage of the current progress towards the integration of EEC markets.

"We are, however, significantly affected by currency fluctuations, especially within Europe, and the strength of sterling in 1988 has had a considerable effect on our sales and margins."

Mr William Mackenzie, the finance director, estimated that during the past year the company lost £400,000 as a direct result of the higher exchange rate, with exchange losses in the current year estimated to be substantially

higher. The exchange rate loss would have been greater had it not been for an exceptional windfall gain of just under £400,000 relating to a dollar exchange rate gain.

"The next year is not going to be easy," he said.

Mr Tony Penne, an analyst at James Capel, the broker, said the group had succeeded in restructuring itself over the past 10 years. However, he forecast no increase in earnings per share for the current year as a result of a higher tax charge and the continued exchange rate problem.

Increased international competition in stamping foils has resulted in reduced operat-

ing margins, from 12.6 per cent down to 8.5 per cent. As a result the group had to reorganize its US sales force.

Shareholders' funds have increased from £25.86 million to £29.28 million. During the year the company invested £6.9 million in new machinery, a level likely to be sustained this year.

It was announced that Mr John Graham, the managing director, would retire in April and be replaced by Mr Adrian Missenden, the managing director of GP Inveresk Corporation.

The final dividend is 6.05p per share, making 8.8p, after 8p last year.

Westland hovers while GKN eyes the controls

COMMENT David Brewerton

Three years ago Westland was plunging to earth for the hardest possible landing, bankruptcy. In the middle of a cold December night, chairman Sir John Cuckney negotiated a support commitment from banks and a few hours later, as the City started up for the day, he announced a £90 million loss.

After an experience like that, Sir John did not find it too hard to report a £25 million provision against an export contract for Sea King helicopters alongside preliminary results. As ever, Westland's results are a mixture of hope, interpretation, pluses and minuses which defy conventional investment analysis. But the bottom line is that earnings per share before exceptional items are steady at 17.3p and the dividend pattern of last year, interim 1.25p followed by final of 2.25p, is repeated.

The latest helicopter provision should be the last, but those who have followed Westland's fortunes over the years will know that there is always another contract skeleton waiting to fall.

But regardless of whether or not there are any more skeletons to tumble, Westland is at the end of one era, and the beginning of another. The change occurred, quietly considering the high political profile of the 1980s "Westland Affair", when Fiat sold its 22 per cent share stake to GKN, the old nuts and bolts business which was looking for a high technology interest to replace its former dependence on the motor trade.

GKN did not, it made clear at the time, move into Fiat's shoes in order to make a portfolio investment. It wishes to get alongside Westland, and be part of Westland's necessary drive both to become bigger and to reduce its dependence on helicopters, objectives which have been on the drawing board for as long as the EH 101 Eurocopter but which have been thwarted by the company's commercial upssets.

The best and most likely way in which that will be achieved is for Westland to acquire from GKN some of the GKN businesses. GKN has ambitions to

control Westland, and the Westland board says GKN's presence "will continue to ensure the British identity of Westland", which seems to matter at least as much as independence.

The choice for outside shareholders with no commercial links with Westland is whether they should stay for a ride in the hope that GKN will do the decent thing and make a full bid, or risk the much less attractive prospect of holding shares in a subsidiary when the parent's interests are not those of a portfolio investor.

As for Sir John, job done, he hands over the chair to Sir Leslie Fletcher in February.

Will Berry be next?

There are striking similarities between Tony Berry of Blue Arrow and George Davies of Next. Both like to combine the job of chairman and chief executive. Both have vision and flair and both have the knack of making enemies in the boardroom. Davies was ejected from his office a week ago; Berry is under attack.

But if Berry resigns from Blue Arrow, it will not be because of the opposition from the Manpower franchise holders in the United States, but because of dissatisfaction with the company at home. The franchise owners, who this week passed a vote of no confidence in the Manpower management, are touchingly loyal to Mr Mitchell Fromstein, founder and former chief executive of Manpower who fell out with Berry and resigned last week. But their loyalty will not unseat the chairman.

Their opposition is, however, the last thing Berry needs. He already has an unwilling major shareholder in the shape of County Natwest and a huge personal debt taken out to support his rights issue. The shares are on their backs with little prospect of recovery in the short term and Fromstein's was the third resignation in six months.

Time is not on his side.

Nigel in the lions' den

Is Nigel Lawson getting in training for the Foreign Office by going off to Paris to practise his French on a conference on privatization? No Lawson speech is complete these days without a reference to the wider non-economic issues and yesterday the Chancellor claimed among the proceeds of privatization not only additional state financing and superior industrial efficiency but "freedom with responsibility" as well.

There is a certain irony in Mr Lawson extolling the virtues of privatization in Paris when his present opposite number in France is trying to undo some of the shareholding structures set up when privatization was in fashion under the previous administration. There are also those in France for whom Britain's privatization programme is not so much an exemplar as an opportunity for profitable investment in the UK. For instance, the French water companies which have been buying up Britain's statutory water companies as fast as they can.

However, if conviction is enough to persuade, Mr Lawson should have convinced at least some of his French listeners of the desirability of privatization and the loss to France from the present government's decision to halt further sales. As for Britain, the Chancellor was in no doubt that further sales were likely, even once coal and perhaps rail had been disposed of in the next Parliament.

New 'reject NI bid' call by Collins

William Collins, the Scottish book publisher, has again written to shareholders urging them to reject the takeover offer by News International, the newspaper group.

Collins said the value of the offer stands at a significant discount to the market price and that, "Collins's excellence merits a premium rating."

The company claimed that its strong share performance reflected its success.

News International replied that Collins shareholders should question their company on why Collins shares had under-performed the FT all-share index by 15 per cent this year up to the offer being made, why operating profit for the six months to June had declined and why the full potential of Harper & Row had not been utilized.

Mr Rupert Murdoch, the chief executive of News International, said: "Collins has still failed to provide satisfactory answers to all the points we raised in our offer document."

Stakis jumps 28% to £24m



Developing presence: Andros Stakis announcing results

By Rosemary Unsworth

Stakis, the Glasgow hotel, casino and nursing home group, has boosted profits by 28 per cent, increased the final dividend by 17 per cent and announced plans to develop its presence in the higher quality hotel market in the south of England.

Pre-tax profits amounted to £24.5 million for the 53 weeks to October 2, against £19 million for the previous 52 weeks. Turnover rose from £114.5 million to £124.2 million. The final dividend is 1.33p compared with 1.14p, making 1.95p compared with 1.68p.

Mr Andros Stakis, managing director, said Stakis intended building 140-bed hotels in the South-east to compete with chains such as Marriott and Holiday Inn.

They would cost about £60,000 per room to build and room rates would be about £70 a night.

Three have already been built - in Wokingham, Bristol and Newbury. Two more sites have been acquired and five more are planned for this year. *Times*, page 24

Scots exports rise by 13%

Scottish manufacturing industry exports have made a significant recovery over the past year after an "abysmal" performance in 1986-87, generating 96,000 jobs.

The Scottish Council for Development and Industry's annual survey shows exports rose 13 per cent in 1987-88 to more than £6.02 billion against £5.13 billion last time.

CH Industrials profits rise 166%

By Our City Staff

CH Industrials, the specialist engineering, building and chemicals group, has boosted pre-tax profits by 166 per cent at the half-year stage.

Profits were £5.67 million against £2.13 million as turnover rose by 94 per cent from £41.6 million to £80 million in the six months to October 1.

Growth came from specialist engineering and design, including five new businesses, where turnover more than doubled to £33.8 million and operating profits were £2.59 million. There were also strong sales increases to the auto and rail industries.

Chemical and polymer profits rose by 12 per cent to £1.21 million although there were production problems at one new moulding plant which created additional costs. Turnover was £17.6 million.

Profits from household products amounted to £1.5 million and office products and shop fittings produced £968,000.

The group's 21.9 per cent holding in Manganese Bronze, the taxi group, produced second-half profits of £287,000.

The interim dividend has been increased by 40 per cent from 0.75p to 1.05p, which will better balance the interim and final payments. The shares are 120p, up 1p.

Figures edge ahead at Bradstock Group

By Our City Staff

Bradstock Group, the quoted Lloyd's insurance and reinsurance broker, has reported a rise in pre-tax profits for the year to end-September from £6.64 million to £6.83 million.

Turnover climbed from £13.09 million to £15.07 million.

Earnings per share, however, dipped from 17.8p to 17.7p.

A final dividend of 5.25p is declared, making 6.75p for the year compared with 5p last time.

There is little sign of the market hardening and the dollar remains weak.

The board anticipates an increase in turnover in the current year and is confident of progress.

In all three areas - aviation, non-marine and marine reinsurance - the company is maintaining its position and gaining new clients.

Psion acquires Dacom Systems for £4.5m

By Our City Staff

Psion is buying Dacom Systems, a supplier of dial-up telephone data modems, for an initial cash consideration of £4.5 million with more to follow depending on profitability over five years.

A substantial part of the initial consideration will be financed by the issue of 2.85 million new shares at 145p each to raise £4.1 million for the company.

All new shares will be offered to shareholders at the 145p placing price.

Of the initial £4.5 million, an aggregate £800,000 is payable to Messrs Bohn and Roberts, two of the vendors, in respect of a non-competition agreement.

Psion had record figures for the first half of 1988. Since then sales have continued to be buoyant and are substantially ahead of comparable figures for the past year.

Kleinwort lays off 35 workers

Kleinwort Benson, the British securities house and merchant bank, has laid off 35 employees in its UK equities division. The job losses, which are understood to involve only individuals below assistant director level, are spread fairly evenly between five departments and include market-makers, salesmen, analysts, settlement staff and back office employees. The redundancies came as the bank completed its annual staff appraisal programme and those losing their jobs were told in individual interviews during the course of yesterday. About 15 of those being laid off had been with the bank only since Big Bang and, although their ages ranged from 20 to 60, none of them is thought to have earned more than £50,000 a year. "We needed to reduce our overheads to a level which allows us to carry on in our business competitively," a Kleinwort spokesman says. "It is a slimming-down, so that we can be as competitive as possible in difficult markets. What is important is that we are not pulling the plug. We are still committed to the securities business, and we firmly believe that these steps are in the best interests, not only of Kleinwort Benson shareholders, but of our remaining employees."

Not at home

So much for keeping your employees informed... a colleague telephoned the

THE TIMES CITY DIARY

For swells in a trough

I have news for redundant City workers in the 45-plus age group who may have given all their hopes of finding another job. Californian Lauretta Blake is looking for "presentable gentlemen" for her Gentleman Host programme which, in essence, supplies men for cruises on ocean liners which would otherwise be overloaded with women - most of them, one imagines, rich and single. According to Blake, who says she screens applicants and then places suitable candidates on cruises which go to South America, Asia and other exciting corners of the world, "We have supplied hundreds of men and everybody always has a great time. It seems like a reasonable way to make a living!"

Tied houses


Do you think that companies which have corporate ties are well-run? According to Tie Rack - of course - you do. And while the old school tie might be on the decline, the corporate tie is very much on the increase. A survey conducted under the guidance of Tie Rack chairman Roy Bistko reveals that 52 per cent of employees think a corporate tie-wearer is taking his job seriously and 60 per cent said they would wear one if issued with it. Possibly persuaded by these findings, eight blue chip employers - ICI, Prudential, Tate & Lyle, NatWest, Bass, Marley, Sleepceze and Cadbury Schweppes - have all introduced new corporate ties. And these days their creation is more sophisticated than simply stamping a company logo on blue fabric. Tie Rack's designers are offering a choice of three styles - "sober, rather brighter, and whacky."

Rhymin' Simon

The Death of a Market, the Eric Baker poem published in part in this column yesterday, seems to have struck a chord with market men. Baker, who left Parrish 18 months ago to return to his old firm Shaw & Co, tells me that one stockbroker ran off 50 copies of it. But not everyone was sympathetic to the market-makers' lament. Simon Cawkwell, a chartered accountant in Jermyn Street, London, replies: "I know I'm getting older and all is change in wealth. But what happened in the City, it brought upon itself. Nature abhors a vacuum and carpetbaggers abound. But brokers stayed empty-headed. So lawyers were to be found. But lawyers need their paying (And they do dream up some law). So brokers went a-baying And asked their clients for more. But silly little brokers (Who had not sold to Yanks) Just found their clients poorer (The bear had broke their banks). The moral of this tale is: 'Just 'cos you are a Tory, Don't think a parvenu Will not come and bore ye.'"


● Barrister Conrad Deha has asked me to point out that, contrary to my report yesterday, he did apply for and receive an allotment of British Steel shares, despite the late arrival of his application form. "I cut an application form from *The Times*," he says.

Carol Leonard



ENGLISH CHINA CLAYS P.L.C.


From Strength to Strength



The Chairman reported pre-tax profits up 30%, earnings per share up 26% and a recommended dividend per share up 21%. He said "The Group is strong, it is soundly managed and well served by its people the world over. On all the present evidence we are embarked on another year of progress in a buoyant mood to seize every opportunity for improving the quality of our business - for our customers, our shareholders, our employees and the communities in which we operate."

ECC GROUP	12 Months to 30 September				
	1988 £M	1987 £M	1986 £M	1985 £M	1984 £M
Sales	936.9	762.5	688.6	713.9	604.2
Pre-tax profit	145.4	112.1	90.4	74.6	64.2
Profit after tax	94.2	72.1	58.1	46.7	37.0
Dividend per share	17.50p	14.50p	12.50p	11.00p	9.60p
Earnings per share	43.82p	34.88p	28.44p	25.97p	22.13p

INDUSTRIAL MINERALS - AGGREGATES - CONCRETE PRODUCTS - HOME BUILDERS



For further information and a copy of our 1988 Interim Results and the Annual Report, write to, telex or fax our Chairman, Sir Alan Dalton, English China Clays P.L.C., John Keay House, St. Austell, Cornwall, PL25 4DJ. TELEX 45526 ECCSAUG. FAX (0726) 623019.

The contents of this statement have been approved for the purposes of Section 57 of the Financial Services Act 1986 by Paul Marwick McLintock who are authorised by the Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales to carry on investment business. Past performance is not necessarily an indication of future performance.

Famous five on the carpet

Criticism of poor progress on the French side of the Channel Tunnel this week stung Transmanche Link to reply in uniquely Gallic fashion.

Five of the most prominent businessmen in France organized an extraordinary gathering in Paris this week. It was billed as a press conference, but turned into a two-hour display of wounded Gallic pride.

Collectively, the heads of France's five largest construction companies are the French construction industry. Yet in their view they have been treated like a bunch of errand schoolboys by Mr Alastair Morton, whose all-consuming task is to build the Channel Tunnel by May 15 1993.



Rapping knuckles: Alastair Morton presides over slow progress to a mid-Channel meeting

Mr Morton started off in August as he meant to continue. He and his French co-chairman M Andre Benard take the view that a penalty clause is a penalty clause and once the contracts were signed, both sides must expect to be held to the fine print.

Conditions were so adverse that the tunnelling machine on the French side was effectively working under water. It was designed to cope with this, but progress was painfully slow.

The missed milestones mean that contractors on both sides of the channel are facing penalty clauses. The French clearly do not relish the prospect even though the sums involved are at present about £15 million — no more than a financial pinprick against the size of the companies involved.

Mr Morton started off in August as he meant to continue. He and his French co-chairman M Andre Benard take the view that a penalty clause is a penalty clause and once the contracts were signed, both sides must expect to be held to the fine print.

John Bell and Susan MacDonald

EEC to compel competition in telecoms trade

From Michael Dynes, Brussels

The European Commission is to launch an ambitious and controversial plan to compel member states to open up their national telecommunications services industries to free competition throughout the community by 1991.

The plan, which will be implemented under the competition provisions of Article 90 of the Treaty of Rome, will oblige member states to abolish their exclusive monopoly rights over the telecommunications services sector, from electronic mail to tele-shopping — except for voice telephony and telex services.

In a separate but related move, the Commission has also submitted a draft directive to the Council of Ministers, calling for the introduction of harmonized telecommunications technical standards for all telecommunications terminal equipment.

The proposal would force public and private telephone companies to publish their technical standards, thereby opening up telecom networks to all equipment manufacturers, and ending the arbitrary power of telephone companies to decide who has access to the network.

The telecommunications services plan, which is expected to be finalized in March, will place the majority of the community's £44 billion services industry into the private sector, and is likely to

face bitter opposition from West Germany, France and Italy, all of whom exercise virtual monopolies over their telecommunications services.

It is also likely to meet stiff opposition from Britain on procedural grounds, despite the British Government's support for the substance of the proposal, for fear that the Commission is overstepping the limit of its powers by refusing to adhere to the normal practice of drawing up a directive for approval by the Council of Ministers.

The Commission has already been taken to the European Court of Justice by member states, following its decision this year to issue its own directive compelling member states to open up the community's terminal equipment market to cross-border competition.

But the Commission, backed by the powerful commercial telecommunications companies, is confident that the court of justice will uphold its authority to liberalize the telecommunications sector under the powers granted to it by the Treaty of Rome.

Mr Peter Sutherland, the competition commissioner, has said from the outset that he intended to make maximum use of the Treaty's competition provisions, as he already has done with competition policy and the liberalization of the air transport sector, an official said.

WPP in \$56m acquisition

By Our City Staff

WPP Group, the advertising and marketing company, has bought HLS Corp, a US marketing and communications company, in a deal that could be worth as much as \$55.9 million (£30.5 million).

The initial payment is \$27.5 million, payable in cash and shares, with up to a further \$28.4 million due, based on a multiple of 10 times HLS's average profits for the three years ending December 1993.

care marketing. Its acquisition marks a further advance in WPP's objective of becoming a leading force in all sectors of marketing services. Among HLS's big clients are Johnson & Johnson, Lederle Laboratories, Searle Laboratories and Marion Laboratories.

Micrelec up by 32% at half time

Micrelec Group, the USM-quoted manufacturer of petrol station automation equipment, showed a 32 per cent increase in pre-tax profits, from \$481,000 to \$634,000, for the six months to end-September.

At least six companies show interest in Metro-Cammell Buyers queue for Laird train-maker

By Derek Harris, Industrial Editor

There are already more than six possible buyers for the Metro-Cammell train manufacturing and bus and taxi businesses which have been put up for sale by Laird, the sealings, packaging and engineering group.

Laird decided to sell its transport systems division because, while it is the old core and best-known part of the group, it contributes barely 4 per cent of profits compared with more than half in 1983.



proposed management buy-out. Lord Weinstock may well turn his attention to Metro-Cammell. GEC, as a producer of train equipment, would fit neatly with Metro-Cammell.

Laird, only a medium-sized operator in the sector, has also been influenced by moves towards bigger international groupings, especially in rail vehicle manufacture.

There have already been approaches for the train-making business from the United Kingdom, Japan, Italy, West Germany and Canada. It is understood that from Japan either Kawasaki or Mitsubishi made an approach.

Lord Weinstock's General Electric Company (GEC) is expected to bid for British Rail Engineering (Brel), the rolling stock manufacturer being privatized out of British Rail, but if GEC loses to the

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Lower profit for LMS

By Wolfgang Mianchan

London Merchant Securities, the property company, has revealed a drop in profits from £7.23 million to £7.02 million for the six months to September 30, despite a rise in net rental income from £8.8 million to £9.53 million.

Capel & Leonard, the oil and gas exploration firm. Lord Rayne, chairman of LMS, said the rental increase had been achieved despite losses at a development in Park Lane, central London, due for completion in 1990.

The results do not include £56 million the company expects from Kelt Energy for its 27.19 per cent stake in Carless.

Earnings per share increased from 2.33p to 2.49p. The interim dividend remained unchanged at 0.8p.

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Table with multiple columns showing option data for various companies and dates. Includes sub-sections for 'RECENT ISSUES' and 'EQUITIES'.

Table titled 'RECENT ISSUES' and 'EQUITIES' listing various financial instruments and their values.

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New role in Europe

It is only 13 years since General Franco died, but in this relatively short time Spanish life has been transformed, politically, economically and in its relations with the international community. While some 38 million tourists a year pour on to the beaches, in the capital, Madrid, high up on the central plateau, there is still a sense of novelty about the greater freedom given by democracy, and a new flexing of muscles unused for a long time.

It shows in the visibly greater prosperity, in a flowering of the arts, in the workings of the still-young democratic system and, for diplomats, in the re-establishment of Spain in the mainstream of European and world affairs, after a long interval.

Not everything is perfect, as the one-day strike called by the trade unions two days ago showed. Though economic growth has been fast, its benefits have not been distributed to everyone, and unemployment is high.

The strike marked a damaging break between the moderating Socialist government, led by Felipe González, and

On January 1, Spain will assume the presidency of the EEC Council of Ministers. For Madrid, writes Peter Strafford, this will be a high point of its growing participation in international affairs



the Socialist-dominated General Workers' Union (UGT).

At the same time, there is an imbalance on the political scene, because the Spanish right, long in power under Franco, is still trying to overcome its disunity and present an effective challenge to the Socialists. But even these manoeuvres serve to point the difference from the repressive days of the old regime.

During the years of the dictatorship, from 1939 to 1975, Spain was very much isolated. It had not begun with Franco, or even with the Civil War which brought him to power, in many ways Spain had been cut off since the early 19th century, when it began a long period of internal turmoil in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars.

For the historically minded, therefore, it seems that Spain has re-emerged from nearly

two centuries of solitude. It is significant that one of the high spots of the autumn has been an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Goya, which shows him as a representative of the Enlightenment, the generation that wanted to reform Spain at the end of the 18th century, before the French occupation and the restoration of the Bourbons ended their hopes.

All this perhaps explains the enthusiasm with which Spanish entry into the European Community, on January 1, 1986, has been regarded. EEC membership presents, and will present, the Spanish economy with great difficulties, including challenges to its industry, its agriculture and other sectors.

But so strong is the relief at the sense of once again being among the respectable countries of Europe that hardly a

voice has been raised against EEC membership.

In the discussions over the EEC's internal market, with its target date of 1992, and in particular since Mrs Thatcher's speech in Bruges earlier this year, Spain has declared itself an ardent European, ready to go as far and as fast as anyone in the direction of greater integration. That includes the controversial areas of social policy and monetary affairs.

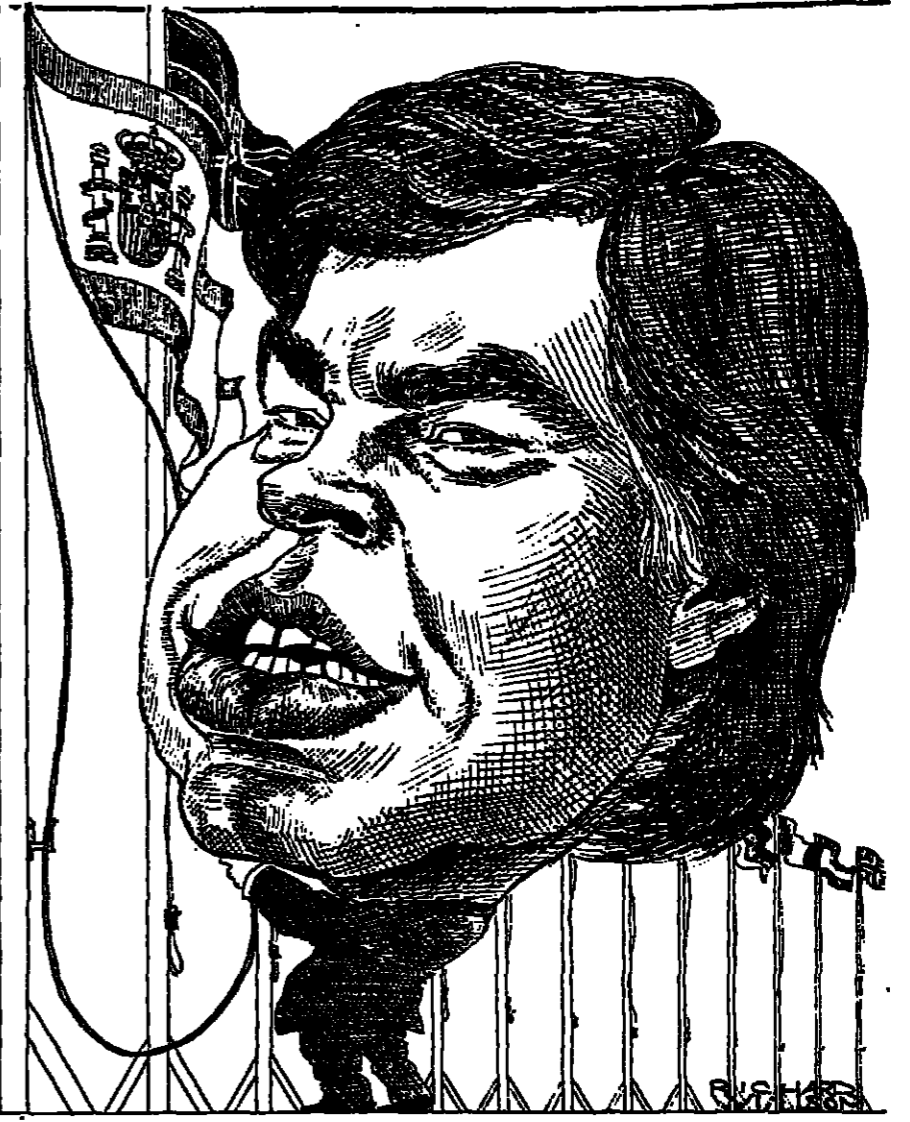
On January 1, Spain will take on the presidency of the EEC Council of Ministers for a six-month period in succession to Greece. This will be a high point of its return to international affairs and, without planning to launch any spectacular initiatives, it has been preparing carefully to make it a success.

Señor González recently identified what he saw as the

priorities for further progress in the Community's march towards 1992: fiscal harmonization, the "social dimension", monetary union, regional spending, cross-frontier TV and increased powers for the European Parliament.

Spain will also continue to press its own particular preoccupations, such as the belief that the EEC should develop closer relations with, and give more aid to, the countries of Latin America, an area in which for historical reasons it takes a special interest; and greater involvement in the Middle East.

But 1992 is, for Spain, more than a Community target date. That year will be the 500th anniversary of Columbus's discovery of the New World. Preparations are already under way for extensive celebrations. The Olympic Games are to be held in Barcelona in the summer, and a world fair, more specifically commemorating Columbus's achievement, will open in Seville. Madrid itself has been declared European Cultural Capital for the year. Spain will really have emerged from its isolation.



A farewell to Francoism

Since Franco's death, Spain has completely re-ordered its defence arrangements. In Franco's time the prime task of the Spanish armed forces often seemed to be the control of the Spanish people, so in this area horizons have widened, writes Peter Strafford.

The first objective was membership of Nato. This was achieved by the centre-right government that preceded the Socialists in office; but it has been controversial because in Spain Nato is often seen as a primarily American-run organization, and Spanish attitudes to the United States tend to be ambivalent.

Like any other Europeans, the Spanish are influenced by American culture. But politically, absence from the two world wars and their sequels has meant that the Spanish tend to have a quite different view of the Americans from that of most other Europeans. They do not see them as liberators, nor as the providers of Marshall Aid.

On the contrary, the Americans are viewed as having been the principal backers of the Franco dictatorship because of the 1953 agreement, signed at a time when the Spanish regime was alone in the world, which provided for cooperation and the establishment of American bases. Some even

look back to the Spanish-American war of 1898.

This attitude helps to explain why Señor González and the Socialists first rejected membership of Nato and then, after coming into office and changing their view, insisted on imposing conditions, principally that Spain would not form part of Nato's integrated forces.

It also explains why they insisted on negotiating a new bases agreement with the Americans, including the removal of the 72 F16s from Torrejon, outside Madrid.

The new agreement has, however, been signed this month, and arrangements for cooperation between Spanish forces and Nato commands were approved at the recent Nato ministerial conference in Brussels. Also, this autumn Spain became a member of the Western European Union, a move which presented no political difficulties because WEU is a purely European organization and is seen as a military counterpart of the EEC.

Taken together, this series of new arrangements has had the effect of putting not only Spain's defence arrangements, but its foreign policy generally, on a completely new basis, unencumbered by the Francoist past.

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Why the Rock is still an obstacle

Relations between Britain and Spain have a long and tangled history, as this year's 400th anniversary of the Spanish Armada has shown. But with Spain now a democracy, and a member of both the EEC and Nato, relations are as close as they have ever been.

The sticking point, as always, remains Gibraltar.

But it is noticeable that both London and Madrid are now making efforts to prevent that from standing in the way of a general improvement of relations.

This autumn, for instance, there were visits to Spain by the Queen and Mrs Thatcher. It was the first time either a ruling British monarch or a prime minister had been in Spain, and each visit marked a new cordiality.

The Queen and the royal family have a close personal relationship with King Juan Carlos and his family. Mrs Thatcher, a Conservative, and Felipe González, the Socialist Prime Minister of Spain, have policy differences, but they are both forceful, innovative leaders, and have a considerable degree of mutual respect.

For Spain, relations with Britain form part of its new network of contacts. For Britain, Spain is both an ally and a commercial partner, since its relatively large and fast-growing economy provides openings for British goods and services.

British exports to Spain have grown healthily in recent years, and there has been an increase in British investment. But the activities of Britain's main competitors — France, West Germany and Italy — have grown even faster, so that more could be done.

How far British trade results are affected by the Gibraltar issue is unclear. But the fact is that there has been some success in reducing tensions over the issue. Spanish officials



Juan Carlos greets the Queen in Madrid

also express satisfaction over the 1984 Brussels agreement which led to the reopening of the Spanish-Gibraltar border and to yearly talks at ministerial level on Gibraltar's future — including sovereignty.

Since then, there has been the 1987 air traffic agreement by which passengers travelling to or from Spain could use Gibraltar airport without going through Gibraltar's controls. This has run into difficulties because the Gibraltarians have refused to accept it, and it has not gone into effect. The election last March of Joe Bassano, who is strongly opposed to the agreement, as Gibraltar Chief Minister, has made a solution more difficult.

The Spanish view is that Britain should persuade, or compel, the Gibraltar government to accept the agreement. The British reply is that the Spanish have to persuade the Gibraltarians of their good intentions, and that they should be patient.

They point out that Gibraltar has been British for nearly 300 years, and that for nearly 20 years, by order of Franco, the Gibraltarians were subjected to a blockade. So it is bound to take time before there is a change of attitude.

Peter Strafford

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Challenge from the unions

The 24-hour general strike called by the trade unions two days ago pointed up one of the ironies in the Spanish political situation. After six years in power, the main challenge to the Socialist government of Felipe González has come, not from the Spanish right, but from the Socialists' comrades-in-arms in the unions.

The strike, the first of its kind since the 1930s — and causing all the more political reverberations because of that — was called by Spain's two main trade union confederations. One, the General Workers' Union (UGT), has always been closely tied to the government party, the Spanish Socialist Workers' Party (PSOE).

But Nicolás Redondo, secretary-general of the UGT, took the unusual step of allying himself with his old rivals, the communist-led Workers' Commissions (CCOO), against the Socialist government because he considered the government's economic and labour policies "anti-social".

It is not unusual for a Socialist or Labour government to find itself up against such opposition. In the Spanish case, the split in the ranks of the Socialists is the result of Señor

Though the Socialists have had strong support from the unions, the workers are now taking industrial action that causes distinct problems for the government, writes Harry Debelius

González' gradual shift to the right from the time of the PSOE's first post-Franco party congress 12 years ago.

During the more than two decades since he first joined the Socialist Youth movement in 1962, Señor González, now 46, has repeatedly surprised acquaintances by his adaptability and his seemingly effortless political skill. But the trajectory of his rising star has been consistently from left to right.

The strategy has had its results. If a general election were held in Spain tomorrow, Señor González would easily win a third term. This holds true despite the fact that nearly 20 per cent of the nation's labour force is out of work, that rampant crime and growing drug addiction are matters of widespread public concern, that inflation is running several points above the original official estimate for 1988, that exports are dropping and imports rising and that the trade union, UGT, has now turned against the government to

side with the Communists. The paradox is explained by two facts: first, the parliamentary opposition is in complete disarray, and second, Señor González has a disarming manner which inspires confidence and tranquillizes his followers even when he is veering to the right of the political course they want him to take.

Under his leadership the PSOE has become big enough to win elections, but it has thrown overboard its ideological ballast bit by bit to become a centre party with social-democratic ambitions. This has widened its appeal, but some old-time party members, class-conscious trade unionists and fervent marxists cannot reconcile themselves to the change.

It has also presented difficulties for the Spanish right, trying to present an effective alternative. Antonio Hernández Mancha, president of the conservative People's Alliance (AP), the biggest opposition party, says that many of the Socialist

government's policies, such as the liberalization of employment and the restructuring of obsolete industries, are supported by business people and right-wing voters generally.

"It is as if Neil Kinnock denationalized British Steel," he said recently. "What would the British unions say to that?"

Moreover, AP is now racked by a damaging internal struggle between Señor Hernández Mancha and its founder and former president, Manuel Fraga Iribarne, the autocratic former minister of Franco, and former ambassador to Britain, who resigned the post of president of AP to make way for Señor Hernández Mancha, but has now announced his desire to return to save the party.

The battle will be fought out at a special party conference next month, with the odds on Señor Fraga to make a comeback. Whatever the outcome, there seems little chance of other centre-orientated parties joining AP in a coalition.

Adolfo Suárez — modern Spain's first democratically elected prime minister — has recently made something of a personal comeback and is pursuing a policy of non-alignment on national issues. He is trying to present his Social Democratic Centre (CDS) party as the alternative to more Socialist rule, notwithstanding the fact that, in numerical terms, it is practically non-existent.

The tiny Christian Democracy (DC) party, recently revived by the hardworking Javier Rupérez, is anathema to Señor Fraga; while some other centre or centre-right parties put regional political goals above national ones. These include the Basque Nationalist Party (PNV) and Convergence and Union (CiU), which is in power in the region of Catalonia.

Despite the disarray on the right and the squabbles on the left, Spain is in no danger of going communist. The Communists have seen to that by embroiling themselves in endless disputes which have split the original Spanish Communist Party (PCE) into about half a dozen parties, some of which, according to a conservative politician's jibe, could be brought around because they would fit in a taxi.



Prime Minister González: Gradual shift to the right since the first post-Franco party congress 12 years ago

Media groups shape up for the TV share-out

The Spanish media are going through a period of rapid change, with bright new prospects for some and dangers for those who do not meet the challenge, writes Harry Debelius.

The main emphasis is on television, where competition is to be permitted for the state television monopoly. But forecasts that overall readership, and advertising revenue, will increase in the daily press, particularly the business-news dailies, mean there is increased activity there too.

In TV, a new, rather restrictive law provides that three privately owned networks will start operating little more than a year from now, in competition with the nationwide government-run RTVE (Spanish Radio and Television Network) channels and with regional channels operated by local authorities in Catalonia, Galicia, the Basque Country and

some other regions. However, Mexico's Televisa has stolen a march on them all. After the failure this year, only months after it started, of Canal 10, a Spanish-backed cable TV service which broadcast via satellite from London, Televisa began beaming Galavisión, a 24-hour daily programme in Spanish, into Spain via satellite on December 6, for the benefit of the growing number of Spaniards with satellite dishes. Among the first to install a movable dish at his home was the man who long resisted authorizing private TV, Felipe González.

The new private TV networks will be required by law to use RTVE's earth-bound transmission and relay installations. The job of improving them so that they become capable of handling the additional traffic is not expected to be completed until late next year. Bids are expected to be called

for in early 1989 for the three available franchises. There is not a long queue, but there are surely more potential bidders than franchises, according to Antonio Asensio, chairman of the Barcelona-based Zeta group, which claims to be Spain's largest group of media companies. He said



Changing media: The publications market is busy and state TV is facing competition for the first time

recently: "The law could be better, but it isn't so restrictive as some people say. We are going for one of the new channels."

He is not sure that all three of the soon-to-be-selected commercial TV companies will survive, but is determined that Zeta's will

"Bear in mind," he added, "that it will be much cheaper to use the public broadcast-relay installations than to create our own. And do not forget that private TV has weapons which the state's TV does not. For instance, Spanish TV now employs 14,000 persons. We can do the job with 750."

Of the other Spanish companies which may hope to pick up one of the three franchises, most of the eligible ones have either been coy or claimed to have lost interest, but one of the most likely bidders was Antenna 3, which has already built a TV studio. Prisa, the group which is centred on the quality Madrid daily, *El País*, and which vies with Zeta in size, could also be a contender.

Likewise the trend-setting 16 group, whose publications include Spain's veteran news magazine, *Cambio-16*, and the Madrid daily, *Diario-16*, may opt for a TV franchise. None of them will do it alone; the law limits the share which may be owned by a company or individual who already owns other media to 25 per cent.

Meanwhile, among newspapers a fairly widespread conviction that the readership and advertising revenue of Spain's daily press

are bound to rise has publishers jockeying for position before European economic integration. The *Financial Times* recently bought 35 per cent of the business-news daily, *Expansion*, and Dow-Jones has bought a significant share of its competitor, *5 Días*.

A long-established provincial newspaper company, Editorial Bilbao, emerged on the scene last autumn as the nucleus of a big new newspaper group, whose combined daily total of copies sold — 462,933 — surpasses the figure for *El País*, which is Spain's most successful newspaper.

There is also jostling in the crowded magazine market. Hachette of France and G+J of Germany have lately increased their investments in the Spanish magazine market. And this year Spain's successful gossip magazine, *Hola*, launched *Hola*, an English version, in the UK.

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Holiday Offers at Ritz
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The twelve days of Christmas are worth carolling about at Madrid's incomparable Hotel Ritz, where special yuletide programmes combine exquisite food with the flawless service and aristocratic surroundings that have made this hotel one of the world's most elegant.

The first of the Ritz' special yuletide programmes begins with a limousine ride on Christmas Eve from the airport to the hotel, where guests are to be welcomed with what the management calls a few "courtneys": a bottle of Sherry, almond paste, a typical Spanish Christmas sweet, a basket of fruit, chocolates and a stylish Ritz bag.

Then there is an optional visit to the Prado Museum (across the street), which houses one of the world's most extensive collections of old masters, followed by Christmas Eve dinner at the justly renowned Ritz Restaurant. Bring an appetite; the special menu includes bouchées of salmon and caviar, squab consommé with ginger, sea bass stuffed with lobster, lamb noisettes, stuffed pears in Champagne, and a few other sinful-sounding nibbles.

Churchgoers can take in another optional event: Roman Catholic midnight mass at the 17th century Los Jerónimos church (less than one block away). The original monastery on this site was founded in 1503, and this church has always been favoured by the Spanish royal family. It is still the scene of many a high society wedding. After mass, a good night's sleep in a perfectly appointed Ritz bedroom.

On Christmas day, Sunday, an American style breakfast and/or a hefty brunch are part of the programme. That night, there is a choice of a ballet performance or dinner and a flamenco show.

Boxing Day offers the opportunity for a visit to Toledo, the medieval seat of empire which still looks much as it did when El Greco painted it, or to Aranjuez, site of the summer palace where Spain's kings and queens used to spend their holidays. Once back at the hotel, a limousine is waiting to take guests to the airport.

A New Year's programme, running from New Year's Eve, a Saturday this year, through Monday, January 2, offers similar refinements, plus a Champagne reception, followed by a gala New Year's Eve dinner with live entertainment and a ball that goes on until it is time for a special Ritz breakfast.

The Ritz Restaurant, under the inspired leadership of Mr. Patrick Buret, the Chef, is preparing more mouth-watering meals for the night of January 5, the eve of the Epiphany, known to Spaniards as Kings' Day. This is the day on which, according to tradition, the Three Kings from the East bring presents to Spanish children, and adults too; so, despite the fact that it comes so long after Christmas, it is still very much a part of the holiday season.

It does not have to be Christmas time, of course, to revel in the refinement of the Ritz, where the level of service is reflected by the fact that there are more staff members than there are rooms. You do not need a special occasion to make yourself at home in rooms and suites with specially designed hand-woven woollen carpets and real antique furnishings. Luxurious tapestries and luncheons in the public rooms remind you that this is more than a hotel; it is a place where those who are accustomed to the highest standards of service; decor and discretion feel at home.

From February through May there is a treat for music-lovers: concerts on one Saturday and one Sunday of each month in the elegant upper hall, which has surprisingly good acoustics. Season tickets, encompassing four dinners and four concerts or four high teas with concerts, are available, as well as individual tickets for each of the four tea concerts.

Throughout the Autumn and much of the Winter, the Ritz offers organized private shooting trips at an estate owned by the Duke of Fernán Núñez just one hour's drive south of Madrid. The package consists of four days and three nights of accommodation at the Ritz; gifts including a basket of fruit, fresh flowers and an embroidered Ritz bathrobe; two days of shooting with all the necessary licenses and permits taken care of (and a generous bag limit of up to 500 partridges per day per party of eight lunchons either at the manor house of the La Flamenca estate in Aranjuez or at the Ritz Restaurant, dinners at the Ritz and a night out at a Flamenco show in Madrid with dinner included. Of course, shooting programmes need not follow the set pattern; they can be tailored to the individual requirements of guests.

By the same token, you do not have to know how to shoot your own meal to enjoy the taste of game in season. A whole month of game menus for gastronomes ended just a few weeks ago at the Ritz, but the experience will surely be repeated in 1989. To mention just a few, among the epicurean specialties served in the series were wild duck consommé with beets, grilled wild boar chops with cranberries, hare in applejack sauce, saddle of venison in cream gravy and partridge stuffed with dates and nuts.

In good weather, which means from early Spring through late Autumn in Madrid's reliably sunny climate, meals are served in the Ritz garden as well as in the adjoining room. For those who prefer to vary their eating habits, there are copious Sunday brunches in the American style (with such exotic delicacies as Virginia ham and corn fritters), ample afternoon teas, and that tempting Spanish culinary institution, tapas. Drinks somehow taste more refreshing in the shade of the bright blue and white parasols or the stout old magnolia and chestnut trees.

The brunches are evidence of the efforts on the part of the Ritz management to keep up with the times without lowering the standard of excellence. Other possessions in the modern world which will be appreciated by busy and discriminating travellers are individual fax machines in the bedrooms on request, direct-dial telephones, double-glazed windows to keep out traffic noise, the bathrooms are the original solid brass ones installed when the hotel was built in 1910 at the instigation of King Alfonso XIII, the grandfather of the present King, Juan Carlos I.

Battle

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SPAIN/3

Battle of the deficit

The dilemma facing the Spanish economy is that it needs to grow more than the economies of the other countries in the European Community because it has more catching up to do.

The faster growth was achieved in 1987 and again this year with annual growth rates of more than 5 per cent. But there are still striking differences with the rest of the EEC, not least Spain's unemployment which, at 18.9 per cent of the workforce, is now the EEC's highest; and Spain's infrastructure and public services are among the EEC's less developed.

Furthermore, inflation, which is now running at an annual rate of 5.1 per cent and exceeds even the second target set for 1988 by the government of Felipe Gonzalez, needs to be reduced to average EEC rates of around 3 per cent.

Otherwise Spanish industry, which is already functioning at a disadvantage because of the small size of the companies compared to the EEC average, and which, partly in consequence, has a low level of technology and poor marketing capacity, will be even less competitive.

As it is, Spain is running a \$2.5 billion to \$3 billion (£1.4 billion to £1.6 billion) current account deficit this year after four years in surplus. This is in spite of a 10 per cent increase in tourist earnings in

Striking a balance between encouraging much needed economic growth and controlling inflation is a minefield at the best of times, writes Jane Monahan. But now the trades unions seem to be complicating matters

the first 10 months of this year, and direct foreign investments amounting to almost \$2 billion in the first half of the year, which was 42 per cent more than in the first half of 1987.

It shows that this combined income is no longer enough to compensate for the yawning gap in the country's trade — the trade deficit was \$1.5 billion (£3 billion) at the end of September, 27 per cent more than a year ago — and for the growing indebtedness of the private Spanish companies abroad.

The last two developments are related, as more than half of all Spain's merchandise imports now consist of machinery, office equipment and transport materials bought by Spanish businessmen keen to increase their factories' productive capacity before the single European market is introduced in 1992.

José María Cuevas, the chairman of Spain's businessmen's confederation, says that one rea-

son why these goods are now being bought abroad is that foreign lines of credit are cheaper. In contrast, the rates of interest for Spanish credit are now one-third higher than the EEC's average.

The existing high rates of interest also make it impractical for the Bank of Spain to raise interest any further, which is a typical measure adopted by a country's central bank when it wants to bring down inflation by dampening demand. In Spain, such a measure would be counterproductive.

As well as cutting demand it would also slow down Spanish investment in industry, which has been a principal factor underpinning the country's economic boom, rising an unprecedented 44 per cent in the three years to the end of 1988.

At the same time, the 300,000 jobs a year that the economy has created during each of the last three years would stop if interest rates increased.

It is also the González government's view that it cannot reduce inflation by curbing government spending — another classic anti-inflationary move — as the planned 18 per cent increase in budget expenditure next year, and a huge 40 per cent planned increase in public works investment, are essential if Spain is to modernize its roads, railways and airports in time for the Barcelona Olympics in 1992, the Seville World Fair the same year, and Europe's single market the following year.

Not only that, but the renewed boom in the construction industry, caused by these projects, together with the massive investment in industrial plant, are the two reasons why the EEC Commission is predicting that the Spanish economy will go on growing at above average Community rates up to 1993.

Also the government's budget deficit in 1989, at 2.7 per cent of GNP, is still going to be less than the 3 per cent this year mainly because of more efficient tax collection and more indirect taxes on items such as tobacco.

Striking a balance between growth and inflation that is good for an economy gearing itself up for greater competition is a minefield at the best of times. However, now that the country's



Wheel of fortune: though the Spanish car industry is growing it is now controlled by five multinationals

main communist and socialist trades unions have embarked on a series of strikes, beginning with the general strike on December 14, there is a risk of the whole house collapsing. At least that is how the unions' stand is being depicted by officials.

On their side, the unions are angry, first because Carlos Solchaga, the Economy Minister, has proposed to employers that pay rises next year should be held at 5 per cent, in line with inflation. They say that now that banks and companies are enjoying excep-

tional profits (the pre-tax profits of private companies soared 65 per cent on average in 1987), Spanish workers are entitled to more substantial pay rises.

Secondly, the unions object to a government scheme aimed at providing young Spaniards with 800,000 jobs over the next three years, because the work contracts involved are temporary and at a minimum wage.

Meanwhile, with Spanish companies still slow to take the initiative, foreigners are contin-

uing to establish positions in the market (mainly by purchasing Spanish companies), and they are now established in all areas started to do well in Europe's single market.

Spain's car industry, for instance, is now controlled by five multinationals. Foreigners control more than 50 per cent of the sales in the food, paper, pharmaceutical and chemical industries. They have total control in advanced industries such as computers. And more than 40 banks established in the country are now foreign.

The delights and dangers of buying a home



Country idyll: village homes at Cuesta La Palma near Malaga

Buying leisure homes in Spain began in earnest in the mid-1970s when northern Europeans were attracted by the then very low property prices and the even lower cost of living.

The British boom did not begin until 1979, when the newly-elected Conservative government abolished exchange control regulations.

Eighty per cent of British buyers still opt for Spain, and particularly the Costa del Sol.

Property in the Marbella region, thanks to the Arab influx of the early 1980s, is now on a par with that of central London. But both the Costa Brava and the Costa Blanca have properties at up to one-quarter the price of a comparable unit in Marbella — where a two-bedroom flat costing £150,000 is the norm rather than the exception.

The situation along the northern Costa Brava is bound to change during the run-up to the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona, as the yachting events will be held there.

The World Trade Fair in Seville will also be held in 1992, but it is unlikely to have the same effect on property, at least for foreigners. The Costa de la Luz as yet holds little appeal for non-Spaniards.

The re-opening of the Spanish-Gibraltar border in February 1985 opened up the hitherto unspoilt end of the Costa del Sol, and land prices have been rising at a steady 30 per cent a year since.

The buying of holiday homes in Spain has not been without serious problems for some people, and these are the subject of a draft report by Edward McMillan-Scott, Member of the European Parliament for Yorkshire.

Mr McMillan-Scott, who has long campaigned to regularize the Spanish property market, takes the view that while many problems result from the failure of the buyer to seek professional advice, there are also serious shortcomings in the Spanish legal system.

"The judicial system in Spain is in a state of near-collapse", he told *The Times*, "as the Spanish themselves recognize. Last year the Spanish newspaper, *El País*, warned of impending 'judicial collapse'. In my own experience in the court of Denia I am aware of some 94 denuncias, which are in the main from UK buyers against two Spanish developers who sold properties with substantial hidden mortgages".

Many problems arise as a direct result of the purchaser being ill advised. Estate agents discourage buyers from seeking independent legal and financial advice — usually by saying that it is unnecessary and a waste of money, and

that they, the agents, will act on the buyers' behalf. The fact is that no sales agent acts on the purchaser's behalf; his client is the vendor.

The Institute of Foreign Property Owners, which has its headquarters in Calpe, lists the following problems:

- Under-declaration of the price of the property on the *escritura* (registered title deed). This is now illegal, yet many agents persuade buyers to under-declare because a percentage tax is levied.

- Difficulties in reaching agreement among owners — most of whom are absent for most of the year — on such administrative matters as painting the outside.
- Unfinished buildings or facilities, promised but never built, perhaps because the developer becomes bankrupt.

One of the more common causes of a buyer losing his home is that the property

What may at first seem a high gross rental income usually ends up at half that expected

concerned is mortgaged by the developer; he then enters into a private contract with an unsuspecting buyer, who pays the whole amount. Should the vendor go bust, the bank has first charge on the property.

Provided proper care is taken, however, and a reputable agent is used, purchasing procedures are straightforward. The Law Society in London has a list of solicitors specializing in Spanish law. Purchasers wishing for an annual return on their investment would be advised to buy in an established resort, and into a scheme where the management company has regular contracts with tour operators. What seems an extremely high gross rental income usually ends up, however, at roughly half at the end of the day.

Commission to the managing and rental agent is around 20 per cent, and outgoings such as cleaning, lighting and general maintenance will account for a further percentage, as will local Spanish taxes.

A regular rental income should cover all the outgoings on the property, including insurance and service charges, and if all goes well leave enough to pay for the owner and his family's holidays.

But it is sensible not to count on covering mortgage repayments, and to consider any such extra income as a bonus.

Diana Wildman

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SPAIN/4

FOCUS

AUTONOMOUS REGIONS

The differences between Spain's very diverse regions, and the division of power between them and the central government in Madrid, have been a constant theme in Spanish history. Since the death of Franco in 1975 and the restoration of democracy, extensive powers over such areas as education, health and local infrastructure have been given to 17 regions, designated as autonomous. They are: Basque Country (population 2.1 million), Catalonia (6 million), Galicia (2.8m), Andalusia (2.8m), Asturias (1.1m), Cantabria (0.5m), Rioja (0.2m), Murcia (1m), Valencia (3.7m), Aragón (1.2m), Castilla-La Mancha (1.6m), Canary Islands (1.4m), Navarre (0.5m), Extremadura (1m), Balearic Islands (0.6m), Madrid (4.8m), Castile and León (2.6m).

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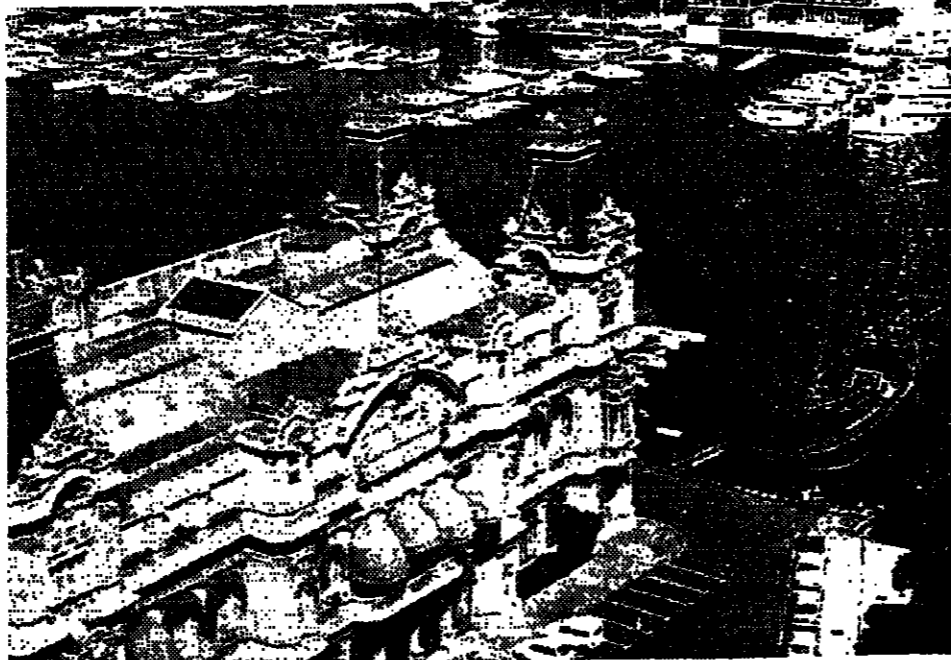
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Barcelona harbour, with a model of Christopher Columbus's ship, the Santa Maria. Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, is to be the site of the 1992 Olympic Games

Clearing the airways for better holidays

If a good part of your last Spanish holiday was spent in airports waiting for delayed flights, take heart. Businessmen and administration officials are actively seeking ways to reduce the inconveniences of "overbooked skies".

José Barriouneo, Spain's Minister of Transport, Tourism and Communications, and Ignacio Fuejo, the Secretary General of Tourism, conferred in London earlier this month with representatives of tour operators and charter airlines to find solutions (including one of the simplest, to schedule more mid-week departures and returns) to summer-weekend air traffic congestion.

Señor Fuejo said that the Madrid government and those of several other countries are aiming to achieve more unified control of European air traffic in order to avoid bottlenecks on customary air traffic routes. They would eventually like to see all Western Europe tied into a single computerized air traffic information centre.

Spanish civil aviation authorities also hope to adopt bilateral measures, especially with France, over which

Harry Debelius sees hope for the harassed traveller in greater cooperation in the skies

nearly all flights to Spain from European cities must pass. One such measure might facilitate the use of air "channels" across parts of Italy at times when traffic over France is especially intense.

On the ground, improvement and enlargement programmes for certain busy Spanish airports, such as Palma de Mallorca, where an additional terminal will be in service next year, have been speeded up.

Notwithstanding air traffic jams, Señor Fuejo is confident that Spain will continue to be a major Mediterranean tourist destination. He claims Spain's offer of tourist beds is vastly greater than that of competing countries; it offers better value for money and it benefits from well-established relations between foreign tour operators and Spanish businessmen.

At the same time Señor Fuejo has good news for fans of Spain's excellent chain of *paradores*, the state-run inns, many of which are old palaces, monasteries, convents or historic castles. After several years during which the *paradores* underwent a physical and administrative renovation to put them on a profit-making basis, and no new ones were opened, the authorities have now given the go-ahead for the creation of four more.

They are in elegant old palaces or stout-walled medieval fortresses in four cities: Seville, monumental Caceres in the west, the surrealistic cliff-hanging town of Cuenca in the east central part of the country, and Sanlúcar de Barrameda, a charming, bougainvillea-draped town at the mouth of the Guadalquivir which is the home of Manzanilla wine. Do not try to book into these new *paradores* in 1989, however. They will not be ready for at least a season or two.

If you are an independent traveller you can upstage your friends by visiting some of the vast, empty beaches, cool green mountains and ancient monuments of the province of Cadiz. The Bay of Cadiz, and destinations inland from there, constitute an area which is destined to become one of the most carefully developed in all Spain.

Lessons learnt elsewhere, and increasingly serious con-

Regional and national administrations are offering enticements for developers who can meet high standards

control by authorities over what may be built and where, will, it is hoped, preserve the natural beauties of the area while making it more attractive in terms of activities and lodging. Quality is the aim in a number of new projects there, and regional and national administrations are offering enticements for developers who can meet high standards.

The most ambitious development is Puerto Sherry, a leisure complex which includes the largest yacht basin for pleasure craft on this side of the Atlantic. It is at Puerto de Santa María in the heart of the sherry district and about seven miles from Jerez.

Señor Fuejo's department continues to be interested in promoting visits by Americans, even in these times of a devalued dollar. But it has to deal with a "mahana and banana" perception of Spain, which is unaware of its Old World refinements, its ancient monuments and its contributions to Western culture.

The problem seems less acute as far as Japan - the other land of the big spenders - is concerned, whose holidaymakers Spain is trying to attract in greater numbers. By some strange affinity, Spaniards and Nipponese hit it off so well that there are first-rate Japanese flamenco dancers and players of the Spanish guitar. Travellers from the Land of the Rising Sun find Spain more exotic and they tend to get deeper under its skin than many Europeans do.

Two big events in 1992 should do a lot to dispel the image of a backward Spain, provided they take place without any major hitches. They are the Summer Olympics in Barcelona and Expo-92, the world fair, in Seville. Special lines of credit are currently being made available for the construction of new hotels and other tourist amenities in those two cities.

While promoting Spain on other continents is important, says Señor Fuejo: "We have no intention of overlooking our best customers, the Europeans, including of course the British, nearly seven million of whom visited us in the first 10 months of this year."

The art of making a lively capital move

Madrid today is one of the liveliest capitals in Europe. Unlike London or Paris, it has the advantage of being contained within a relatively manageable area, with a population of some five million.

They have invented a word to describe the vitality of post-Franco Madrid: *la movida*. Here everything is "moving" (except the cars). Much of the credit for this must go to the late Mayor, Enrique Tierno Galván, known as "the Old Professor", who died in 1986. Witty, urbane and courageous, Tierno "galvanised" the city into action, true to his second surname.

The promotion of the arts played a major part in Tierno Galván's plans for Madrid. His efforts, along with those of the Ministry of Culture, are now bearing fruit. People are aware, particularly, that Madrid's great north-south central avenue, the Castellana, which stretches for over six kilometres, is now one of the most art-orientated thoroughfares in the world.

A tour down this "cultural axis" could suitably begin in the Plaza de San Juan de la Cruz, at the Natural Science Museum, whose elegant, 19th century dome is a landmark, but further south, at Castellana 51, the Catalan Savings Bank has been mounting outstanding exhibitions of Spanish and foreign painting over the last few years, while, a stone's throw away, the Banco Exterior de España, at number 32, also holds exhibitions of high quality.

But it is in the Plaza de Colón ("Columbus Square") that the Castellana's art scene really moves into top gear. Here, under the park, is the subterranean Madrid Cultural Centre, where concerts, poetry recitals, theatre, puppet plays and art shows all flourish. Alongside is the National Library, whose Picasso Rooms, where exhibitions are frequently held, have become a mecca for art enthusiasts.

From here south it is culture all the way. Within a small area we have not only the Prado itself, with its uncountable riches, but the Casón del

Queen Retiro, its appendage, which houses the gallery's 19th century collection as well as Picasso's *Guernica*.

Moreover, arrangements have just been made for the Prado to take over the nearby Army Museum, whose collection will move to Toledo, while across the avenue, on the corner of the Plaza de Castelar, with its famous Neptune fountain, the gallery has acquired new premises at the Villahermosa Palace, where the Thyssen Collection is to be installed.

Immediately south of the Prado lies the Botanical

Madrid has on offer a series of excellent exhibitions

Garden, made at the end of the 18th century by the civilised Charles III. Exhibitions are often held in its pavilion. To round it all off, at the end of the Castellana opposite Atocha station is the Queen Sofia Arts Centre, opened in 1986 in a huge converted 18th century hospital miraculously saved from the pickaxe.

The centre has three main functions: to bring modern art to the notice of the general public, stimulate artistic creativity and promote contact with movements in other countries. Moreover, it seems that the Spanish Contem-

porary Art Museum (now on the outskirts of the city) is to be moved to the Queen Sofia.

The galleries and museums grouped along the great avenue are only a part, it must be added, of what is happening in Madrid.

There are also the activities at the Fine Arts Circle, just off the Castellana in Alcalá Street, and at the Juan March Foundation; the recently opened National Music Auditorium; the Conde Duque Cultural Centre (on the western edge of town); and the many commercial galleries.

At the moment Madrid has on offer a series of excellent exhibitions, *British Painting from Hogarth to Turner*, at the Prado, which is packing them in; masterpieces from the Phillips Collection from Washington at the Queen Sofia; *Charles III and the Enlightenment at the Vauxhall Palace in the Retiro Park*; *Goya and the Spirit of the Enlightenment* at the Villahermosa Palace; the Leo Castelli collection at the Juan March Foundation; and *The Alliance of Two Monarchies: Wellington in Spain* at the Municipal Museum.

To cap it all, from December 19 we will be able to see the *Matisse in Russian Collections* show at the Queen Sofia.

Ian Gibson

The author's biography of *Lorca* is to be published in June



Queen Sofia visits a Goya exhibition at the Prado

CATALAN BUSINESSMEN, AUTHORITIES JOIN FORCES TO ENTICE MORE TOURISTS

Barcelona, Spain

Catalonia has 12 ski resorts with 20,000 beds and it is closer and cheaper than Austria for British skiers - but how many of them know that?

Not enough of them, but more than before, according to Señor Alejandro Betoret Ferrer, Director General of the Catalan Tourist Promotion Consortium.

Seeing to it that snow-lovers as well as other potential visitors realize what Catalonia has to offer is a full-time job for Señor Betoret. It is not that he finds it hard to convince people of the wonders of his region; it is just that there are lots of people to convince and many of them do not even know where Catalonia is.

Señor Betoret is so busy singing the praises of his land abroad that he has little time to enjoy its advantages himself. London was one of his latest stops; there he supervised a stand and promotional activities at the Daily Mail Ski Show. In close cooperation with businessmen from the various winter resorts in the autonomous region of Catalonia, he spread the word that these ski spots are not overcrowded, that they have been greatly improved as a result of investments totalling nearly three billion pesetas (about pounds 14.6 million) over the past four years, and that they have something no other country's resorts have: the Spanish sun.

"We hope to encourage tour operators to sell Catalan ski holidays," explained Señor Betoret during one of his brief stops in his office here. "We have to get across the advantages of skiing in Catalonia, where we not only have the essentials like mechanical lifts and snow cannons to help nature's coverage when necessary, but we also have, for example, a great many of the finest Romanesque churches in the world."

The most famous of the Catalan ski resorts is Baqueira-Beret, in the Aran Valley, where sportsman King Juan Carlos and his family take a holiday every winter. It has 18 lifts, and its longest runs drop from an altitude of 2,500m. to 1,500m. There are 25 runs altogether, some for beginners. In the late Spring, after most of the snow has melted, hunters and hang-gliders take over on the slopes, and fishermen pull fat trout from the streams and lakes.

Only five km. away from Baqueira-Beret is La Toca, where the total vertical drop is 1,130m. and there are nine lifts with a capacity of 3,900 passengers per hour. After winter ends, four-wheel drive vehicles can be hired at nearby Vielha to take you deep into the rugged mountains.

Another skiers' venue, popular with weekend trippers from Barcelona, is Espot, with a total vertical drop of 870 meters and four lifts. Espot and Super Espot (two km. up the road) dominate the lovely Espot Valley, a wonderland of natural lakes and rushing streams. The Aiguas Tortes and San Maurizio Lake National Park, Spain's second largest, is reachable from Espot.

About 45 kilometers south of Espot, at Sort, is another resort, Llesius, with 30 km. of runs and nine lifts.

La Molina, with a total vertical drop of 1,107m. and 18 lifts, three ski-jumps and two stadiums, is reachable by rail from Barcelona or France. There is even an airport, but for light planes only, at Alp, eight km. away.

The other Catalan resorts are Aranset, at Lles, near Girona; Masella, near Alp Nivida, at Querolles, near Girona; Fort del Comte, at La Coma i la Pedra, near Llerida; Rasos de Peguera, at Berga, near Girona; Sant Joan de l'Erm, at Montferrer i Castelló, near Llerida, and Vallter 2000, at Setcases, near Girona.

Five days of skiing and a weekend in Barcelona or somewhere else on the Mediterranean, suggests Señor Betoret, would make an ideal one-week winter holiday in Catalonia.

Skiing, of course, is only one of the many things the Consortium promotes. The Costa Brava beaches, already popular with holidaymakers from the U.K.; Barcelona's music, theatre and museums; Catalonia's unique cuisine and its fine wines, which are earning just recognition around the world; its roots in ancient history, and - for a more up-to-date note - the preparations for the 1992 Olympic Games which are to be held in the Catalan capital, are high on the list of attractions of this proud region, bounded on the north by the Pyrenees, on the east by the Mediterranean and on the west by the region of Aragón.

The Consortium was designed as a support for all kinds of tourist-promotion activities. One-half of its members are employed by the Generalitat and the other half are businessmen from the tourism sector. Its President is Señor Angel Miguel Sans, who is also Director General of Tourism of the Generalitat, the Catalan autonomous government.

"The Generalitat considered that private businessmen had been making a tremendous effort on their own to sell Catalan tourism for many years," Señor Betoret continued, "so it decided to create an entity to give them some help. Although its makeup is half business and half official, it is financed by the Generalitat. Any businessman in the sector can call on the Consortium for promotional help."

"The advantage is that while it is public, it can make decisions quickly, and all its decisions are made after listening to the most affected or interested parties. All its actions are subject to control by the administration."

The Consortium has three major objectives at present: first, to spread out the tourist season in Catalonia in order to keep tourist-related industries busy as much of the year as possible; second, to improve the quality of the tourist product, and, third, to stimulate more visits to the scenic interior.

The Consortium is currently concentrating its efforts on Europe, although its aim is worldwide promotion. It takes part in about 40 tourist trade fairs per year. It also brings four or five travel writers to Catalonia every week to show them why the region deserves a special mention in their respective media. It sponsors promotional contests on television in several European countries. It offers special discount programs in the hope of inspiring word-of-mouth promotion of Catalonia's charms, such as the current one which gives civil servants of the European Community 50% off.

"We'll extend the offer later to other selected groups," Sr. Betoret revealed.



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At the Spanish Promotion Centre, London

YOUR OWN BUSINESS

By Derek Harris
Industrial Editor

Modelled from the wood

By Ian A Jack

A former hairdresser from Kingston-upon-Thames is now lovingly creating many specialised products in wood on Tyneside — from a conductor's rostrum to a replica of a Model A Ford estate car. "I grew tired of talking to myself in the mirror," says Stuart Solomon, aged 38. It was, he added, a love of creating things with his hands that caused him to make the switch.

Mr Solomon actually hails from that other Kingston — Kingston-upon-Hull. And with relatives in Newcastle-upon-Tyne he chose that city to launch his new business. One by one, from a council-owned workshop unit in Byker. "A workshop in the South would cost an arm and a leg", he

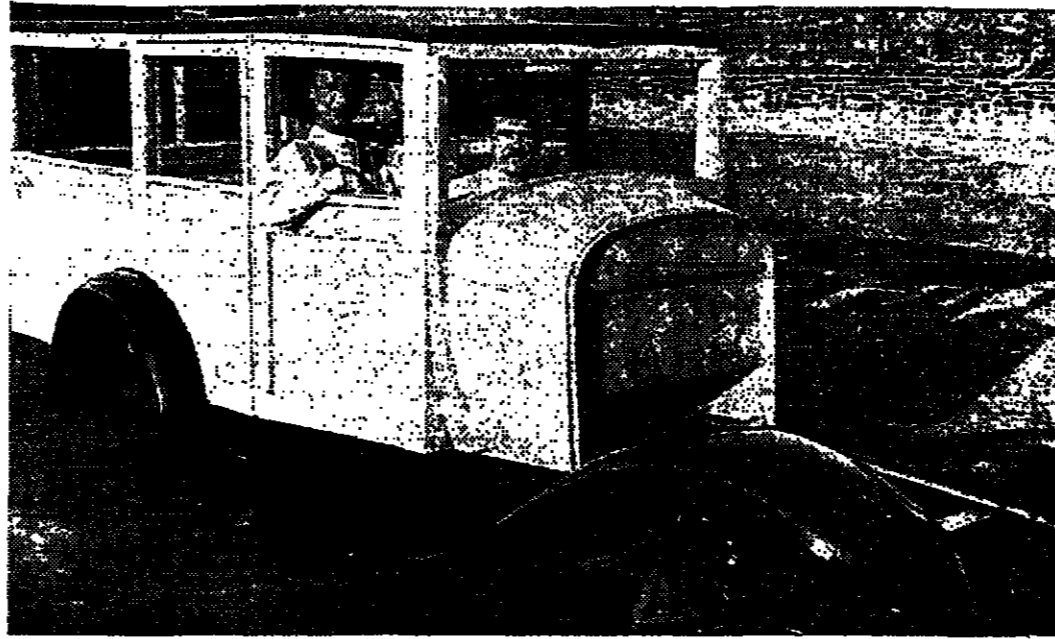
says. "But here in Newcastle I pay a low rent to help me get established. It really doesn't matter where I turn out the kind of products I make."

Mr Solomon's range is diverse, from a model of a display stand for a major oil company which was created, finally, full-size at the National Exhibition Centre, to a cheval mirror — and, of course, the car. "I have always loved creating things, even though I have had no formal training," he says.

For 16 years, while he was in Kingston-upon-Thames, he found an outlet for his artistry through hairdressing. But always, in the background, he was making things in wood and in plastic and eventually the idea dawned that he could turn his hobby into a paying business. He sold his hairdressing shop and headed north.

In October last year he moved into the enterprise workshop here. Low rent protects him to some extent from the chill of start-up costs. He had hardly installed his equipment when his first customer walked in, to order components for educational toys.

It would be wrong to suggest that everything has gone easily since then. Work has come steadily but not profusely. The scale model of the exhibition stand was followed by another for the Ideal Home Exhibition and the conductor's rostrum was built for an orchestra in the Scottish



Stuart Solomon (left) and Gordon Winwood in their Model A Ford replica

borders. But it is the creation of a wooden-bodied Model A Ford of 1929 vintage that has proved, literally, his biggest challenge to date. Teaming up with Gordon Winwood of Custom Design Engineering in an adjoining workshop, Mr Solomon has built the maple body while Mr Winwood has provided the engineering to create a fully-working car.

"Only a few hundred of this particular model were made by Ford", Mr Solomon explains,

"and we are hoping that enthusiasts will go for our vehicle. It will be built only to order with a price of around £18,000." Perhaps surprisingly, the first inquiry has come from Belgium.

Old-fashioned craftsmanship has been matched by modern business techniques in Mr Solomon's quest for assignments. He has conducted a local mailing shot which "has produced some work and recently he took space at a Tyneside trade exhibition with a

subsidy from the city council. "That was a gamble", he admits. "It meant preparing some examples of work to place on show and it meant three days away from the workshop altogether. On balance, it was worth it because I had a lot of inquiries and landed a £1,200 order for a mahogany staircase."

Contact: One By One, Unit 6, Albion Row Industrial Estate, Albion Row, Byker, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE6 1LQ. Tyneside (091)276-3780.

Hotline for the entrepreneur



Local enterprise agencies in key centres around Britain are being linked to two extensive databases to provide more quickly and efficiently business advice to entrepreneurs, writes Derek Harris.

It is an initial move which is expected to build into a nationwide scheme which through computerization will bring constantly updated information to the elbow of the entrepreneur, eventually covering a wide range of data from sources of financing to information from European databases.

The scheme is being launched under the aegis of Business in the Community (BiC), the umbrella body for Britain's 300 enterprise agencies, with financing organized by BiC's Finance for Enterprise target team, chaired by Sir David Scholey, chairman of the

S.G. Warburg financial group (left). Sponsorship cash will come mainly from companies.

At first the databases will cover sources of government assistance for businesses as well as the regulations, such as health and safety, with which businesses must comply. The databases have been developed at the University of Strathclyde and are managed by a university-associated company, EPRC.

The 16 agencies involved are: in England, at Blackburn, Bolton, Runcorn, St Helens, Sheffield, Doncaster, Newcastle upon Tyne, Bristol, Cusworth, Plymouth and Stroud; in Scotland, Glasgow; and in Wales Merthyr Tydfil, Ogwr (near Bridgend) and Decade. They expect to start offering the service after the end of January.

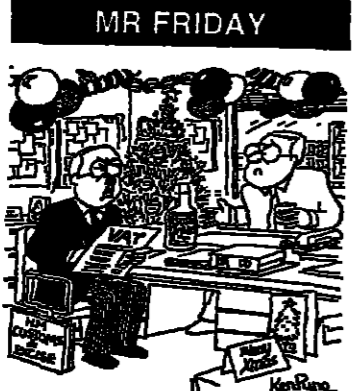
Initially the service will be free and limited to personal callers.

BRIEFING

Small businesses which rely on cars as an essential tool of the trade remain angry about the doubling of the tax rate for company vehicles announced in the last Budget, according to the latest quarterly survey by the Forum for Private Business. Stan Mendham, the forum's chief executive, said: "Small businesses rely heavily on cars. They feel they are being unfairly treated in a

Budget proposal which was really aimed at big company executives given cars as a perk."

A third of the 2,600 companies in the survey said their businesses were no better off after the Budget. There were 24 per cent who claimed they would not benefit personally but 64 per cent said they would benefit.



MR FRIDAY

"No, I don't celebrate Christmas — life's too short to be merry"

BUSINESS TO BUSINESS

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MOTURING

Service without a smile

Car servicing by some local dealers has become appalling, says Daniel Ward. But there are changes on the way

Having a car serviced by a local dealer can be an expensive and inconvenient exercise which has hardly been improved to match the retailing revolution in the high street.

The depressing sequence of events begins when phoning the dealer, to be told that it will be two weeks at least before an appointment can be made.

Inside the reception office of a busy dealer, you face a queue that moves at a snail's pace as every last exacting detail - which you gave over the phone when booking the car in - has to be repeated in order to elicit answers to searching questions such as "Where do you think the noise is coming from?"

Women, in particular, find the receptionists condescending and dislike going into dealers. Who can blame them? My wait in the morning at a local Ford dealer used to stretch to 25 minutes, followed by a similar delay to collect the car in the evening.

Research by Jonathan Brown, Professor of Retailing at Brighton Business School, reveals that a buyer will



charges for cleaning materials in respect of the job.

Worse is the practice of some dealers who charge a minimum of 30 minutes' labour. When a replacement for a broken wing mirror glass was clicked into place in minutes it was charged a £12 fitting cost.

The only possible conclusion is that there has to be a better way to have a car serviced. And there is.

Tucked away at St Leonards, East Sussex, under a sign proclaiming Fiat, though arguably the make is irrelevant, is the SLM garage, which aims to retain as service customers 75 per cent

of the Fiat owners in the area. By industry standards, 40 per cent would be very good for cars up to five years old, though this performance is under severe pressure from the growing number of fast-fit outlets which have virtually removed the tyre/factory/exhaust custom from dealers.

In January, SLM will open its fast-fit facilities to the new challenge, but customer loyalty has been established by treating motorists properly.

How far for a new car?

The job of today's car salesman is no longer the stereotype hard-sell; it is simply to do nothing that will deflect the buyer from the choice he or she made before entering the showroom.

not a car one, and the impression created is important from the first person you meet when coming through the door.

Customer relations come first, repairing cars second. The receptionist has an unhurried, friendly manner that is matched to considerable authority.

Mr Wakeford says: "We have to deal with any complaints just like Marks and Spencers do." The customer is not expected to trail back to the dealer for the fault to be corrected.

Waiting for a car to be readied is made as painless as possible with a comfortable, windowed seating area with newspapers.

Today, computers play an important role in fast service and are vital if dealers are to arrest the growth of fast-fit centres.

Off-the-cuff estimates, which rarely prove accurate, should be a thing of the past. Indeed, garages are slowly switching to "menu pricing" for standard services.

For the car-makers, it is exasperating that they cannot order all their dealer stock for certain hours each week. If the parts department is open for a few hours on Saturday morning, it seems that we customers should consider ourselves lucky.



Style with a sporty feel

The assumption has been that the French are in their element producing smaller cars; move into the mid-range and their designers seem to be happier with soft-riding suspension rather than powerful engines.

But it is no longer wise to assume that German-built sporting saloons and hatchbacks are the best. In that league the Peugeot 405 Mi 16 has raised the reputation of the French in this increasingly important market sector.

The new 16-valve 1.9L engine from PSA (Peugeot and its sister company Citroën) puts this view to the test. It is found under the bonnet of the Citroën BX16v and Peugeot's 405 Mi 16. They are both fast, agile rivals and very competitive.

These regulations apply to every process involving asbestos or any article composed wholly or partly of asbestos, except a process in connection with which asbestos dust cannot be given off.

Before the crown court, the defendants had contended that the 1969 Regulations did not apply because the demolition of the factory was not a process carried out in their factory.

The House of Lords, overruling the decision of the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) in R v A. I. Products plc (1987) 1 Cr App R 413, allowed an appeal by the prosecutor, Mr Michael Godfrey Nurse, from the Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Woolf and Mr Justice Hirst).

model. Fine Plainfarma styling, with its ultra-modern slim headlamps and raked rear screen is made to look tastefully sporty with the addition of neat alloy wheels and a small rear spoiler.

The engine has a better spread of performance than many 16-valve units but it is still peaky. Using the whole 7,000 revs unleashes strong acceleration, but the penalty is a fair amount of engine noise; this subsides when cruising.

The Mi 16 is a likeable, racy machine with few flaws, and what it lacks in solid feel and ruggedness, it makes up for with a low price and energetic spirit.

Top speed is 130 mph, and the price includes goodies

The right balance between a comfortable ride and sporting handling is not easy for a car like the Mi 16. The result is reasonable though it does not bear comparison with the excellent Peugeot 309 GTI.

The Mi 16 is a likeable, racy machine with few flaws, and what it lacks in solid feel and ruggedness, it makes up for with a low price and energetic spirit.

ROADWISE

PO Box 44, Leatherhead, Surrey KT22 7AE. Prices, £10.95 and £19.95, depend on running time. The Porsche Driving Book (the author's, £18.95) encourages owners to be more expert and safe. The driving section of the book is written by one of the country's leading experts, John Lyon, who from personal experience drives with confidence, smoothness and superb anticipation and expertise. The book includes an interesting look at the Porsche racing heritage and research and development.

Law Report December 16 1988 House of Lords

Demolition is a factory 'process'

Nurse v Mergaite Cracible Ltd. Before Lord Bridge of Harwich, Lord Templeman, Lord Griffiths, Lord Ackner and Lord Lowry [Speeches December 15]

A "process" in a factory within section 76(1) of the Factories Act 1961 and the Asbestos Regulations (SI 1969 No 699) made thereunder was any operation or series of operations of more than minimal duration.

The House of Lords, overruling the decision of the Court of Appeal (Criminal Division) in R v A. I. Products plc (1987) 1 Cr App R 413, allowed an appeal by the prosecutor, Mr Michael Godfrey Nurse, from the Queen's Bench Divisional Court (Lord Justice Woolf and Mr Justice Hirst).

The 1969 Regulations have been applied in the present case in R v A. I. Products plc. It was, his Lordship thought, manifest from the wording of the judgment of Lord Justice Woolf that the word "process" in the regulations meant any activity or operation of more than minimal duration.

Mr John F. M. Maxwell and Mrs Carmel Wall for the prosecutor, Mr John H. E. Saunders and Miss Alison Lockwood for the defendants.

LORD GRIFFITHS said that the defendants manufactured crucibles. Asbestos was not used in the manufacture. Between April 25 and May 2, 1964, the defendants had demolished a number of driers in their factory.

Two of the driers were 40ft by 12ft by 8ft high. They were of brick construction. The roofs were made of panels of corrugated asbestos. Driers had never been demolished at the factory before.

In the course of the demolition, the defendants had failed to comply with the requirements of the 1969 Regulations. Three informations had been preferred against them alleging offences contrary to section 155(2) of the 1961 Act in that they had failed to provide respiratory protective equipment for the use of employees.

Section 176 of the 1961 Act provided: (1) Where the minister is satisfied that any manufacture, machinery, plant, equipment, appliance, process or descrip-

tion of manual labour is of such a nature as to cause risk of bodily injury to the persons employed... make such special regulations as appear to him to be reasonably practicable and to meet the necessity of the case."

Regulation 3(2) of the 1969 Regulations provided: (2) These regulations apply to every process involving asbestos or any article composed wholly or partly of asbestos, except a process in connection with which asbestos dust cannot be given off."

The Crown court, the defendants had contended that the 1969 Regulations did not apply because the demolition of the factory was not a process carried out in their factory.

The Crown court, in a case stated that was a model of its kind, had accepted the prosecutor's contention that "process" in the regulations meant any activity or operation of more than minimal duration.

It was clear from the judgment of the Divisional Court that they had fully allowed the defendants' appeal because they had rightly held themselves bound by the decision (after that had been set aside) in the present case in R v A. I. Products plc.

There were also two powerful indications from the wording of regulation 5 that "process" was to have a broader meaning of including any activity of more than minimal duration involving the use of asbestos.

Some common sense had to be introduced into the definition of the word "process" to be given its meaning under the 1961 Act and our judgment. The word "process" as used in this section (175) and elsewhere in the 1961 Act connotes some continuous activity regularly carried on within a factory, and does not include a single operation such as the demolition and removal of a disused piece of machinery or a kiln.

Later they had said, at p424: "... it is wrong to extend the meaning of the word 'process' in the 1961 Act beyond some manufacturing process or continuous and regular activity carried on as a normal part of the operation of a factory."

In arriving at their conclusion, the Court of Appeal had focused primarily on the meaning to be attached to "process" which appeared in the definition of a factory in section 175(1) of the 1961 Act. His Lordship thought that that had led them into error.

"Process" was a word of very wide general meaning and had to take its colour from the context. When used in the context of defining a factory, it was natural to think of it in the context of the operations carried on within the factory.

The 1969 Regulations, however, were not confined to operations carried on within a factory, but applied to any activity or operation which the Court of Appeal's attention did not appear to have been drawn to in R v A. I. Products plc.

If the Court of Appeal's decision was correct, it would gravely limit the protection of the 1969 Regulations as applied to building operations, and it was also difficult to see how they would apply to what was one of the primary risks from asbestos dust, namely the use of asbestos lagging material either for pipes or for furnace repairs.

It was to be observed that "process" in the enabling section 76(1) of the 1961 Act was used in apposition to the word "factory" and would appear to be used in a wide sense.

Regulation 3(2) of the 1969 Regulations was framed in simple language, and his Lordship could find no indication that "process" was to have a narrower meaning than the single broad meaning of "any activity".

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nition. Obviously, the single act of knocking a nail into an asbestos panel could not be considered a process. There had to be some degree of continuity and repetition of a series of acts.

On the facts of R v A. I. Products plc and the present case, the activity had gone on over a period of days involving materials containing asbestos, and it was not a one-off activity.

Their Lordships had been referred to a number of authorities in which the meaning of "process" had been considered in other contexts, particularly that of the extension of the meaning of a "factory" within the meaning of section 175 of the 1961 Act.

His Lordship did not wish to cast any doubt on the correctness of those decisions, but he did not desire any assistance from them because the word "process" was used in an entirely different context.

Still less did he derive any assistance from Fibroplast Ltd v Holland (1981) 1 All ER 526 in which the word had been considered in its context in the Capital Allowances Act 1968.

The word "process" was scattered throughout many sections of the 1961 Act, and it appeared in many regulations made thereunder. Their Lordships had not had the opportunity to consider the meaning to be attached to it wherever it appeared, and it was possible that it had different meanings in different contexts.

His Lordship would confine his opinion to the meaning of the word "process" as used in the 1969 Regulations. There, it meant any operation or series of operations being an activity or more than minimal duration.

His Lordship would allow the appeal and restore the defendants' convictions. Lord Bridge, Lord Templeman, Lord Ackner and Lord Lowry agreed.

Solicitors: Treasury Solicitor, Pimsett & Co, Birmingham.

Political asylum bar

Regina v Immigration Appeal Tribunal, Ex parte B

An applicant would not qualify for political asylum merely by choosing to conduct himself in the host country so as to create the very risk of persecution which then founded his claim to refugee status.

There had to exist some principle whereby an immigrant could not become entitled to political asylum merely by choosing to conduct himself in the host country so as to create the very risk of persecution which then founded his claim to refugee status.

The precise limits of such a principle were not easily determined. Not all voluntary activity should be disqualified from consideration but had firm and unresponsible conduct, should, but that had to be decided by the tribunal in each case.

CAR BUYERS' GUIDE

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Tax-paid bets could give fairer shares

RACING AND THE BOOKMAKERS

The Horserace Betting Levy Board and the Bookmakers' Committee cannot agree on how much money racing should receive from betting: at the moment only £28 million of the £3.126 billion turnover is returned to the sport.

The Home Secretary has become an unwilling referee. Is there a way out of the impasse? In the final part of their series, Christopher R Hill and Graham Rock offer these solutions



One man and his dog, the traditional face of British betting shops: The first customer arrives at the John Humphreys branch in Chislehurst. Improved services have started to attract a wider cross-section of punters

WHY RACING WANTS MORE MONEY

JOHN BIGGS, director-general of the Racehorse Owners' Association

"Prize-money in the United Kingdom has never been adequate at any level, and what money has been available has been heavily skewed towards the top end of racing, both Flat and National Hunt.

All sections are now realizing that if the base of the pyramid is to be secured more money needs to be put in at the bottom to make sure that those owners lucky enough to have a horse good enough to win three months later actually receive their racing costs.

At the moment, the owner of such a horse would recover rather less than half his racing costs, and not many owners have a horse good enough to win three times."

JEREMY HINDLEY, president of the National Trainers' Federation

"The recent and largely well-publicised changes in racehorse ownership by the Arab world has served to paint a misleadingly rosy picture of the state of racing and the training profession.

In this year's Flat trainers' results, based on prize-money won, all of the top 12 trainers were heavily supported by leading Arab owners. Indeed, in the top 30 trainers, there are only 10 who receive no real Middle Eastern support. If the income of these 10 was to result solely from their 10 per cent of prize-

money, their average income would be £25,000.

The top 10 National Hunt trainers - where there is no Arab support - had an average income of £29,800 as their percentage of prize-money. Such a profit makes pathetic reading as return on capital.

It is a vital necessity for this Levy dispute to be resolved to the long-overdue benefit of the health of British racing."

MICHAEL CAULFIELD, secretary of the Jockeys' Association

"Despite recent developments, riders feel that medical procedures on racecourses could be improved further. There is a desire for the introduction of full-time paramedics to cope with the injuries that unfortunately occur.

To back up this operation, a swifter evacuation to hospital is required. Each racecourse would need adequate ambulance cover, and the long-term objective must be the introduction of helicopters."

GENERAL SIR PETER LENG, chairman of the Racecourse Association

"To the public, racing is a rich man's sport. Not so for the racecourses. Attendance falls in the main because of the opening of betting shops, affecting racecourses' profitability, leading to higher admission charges.

A survey showed a third of racecourses making profits of less than £5,000. No wonder facilities have fallen behind, not only for patrons but in areas out of the public eye - stables and lads' accommodation. Racecourses need much more income over a long period to get their house in order."

SAM SHEPPARD, of the Thoroughbred Breeders' Association

"The results of the 1988 domestic yearling sales show quite clearly that the majority of British bred and raised yearlings are sold at a figure below the cost of production.

New owners, and money, will be attracted to the sport if there is a reasonable expectation of covering the costs of ownership if a horse proves to have some ability.

Minimum advertised values must be increased to the £4,500 to £5,000 mark per acre to make a real impact."

ANTHONY FAIRBAIRN, chairman of the Racegoers Club

"It is the punter who pays the Levy - not the bookmaker - and while he, too, wants thriving racing industry he does not have a bottomless pocket from which to finance many extra millions.

In addition to betting tax of £300 million, he is already paying about £75 million each year in Levy and to the racecourses he visits. In reality a successful £12 each-way Yankee bet, which is the integrity of the sport, an improvement in the public facilities on racecourses, and better crowd control."

THE BETTING SHOP

Satellite Information Services equipment has been installed in John Humphreys' betting shop in the last week. The manager, David Theobald, said there had already been a definite increase in trade generated by the improved facility.

Humphreys' Chislehurst shop is the biggest earner in the group of five he runs in Kent, although it is not the busiest in terms of slips over the counter. Estimates put the turnover at £20,000 in a good week, reflecting a prosperous community.

"Workers from Sainsbury's and the other High Street shops rub shoulders with clearing ladies and players from the local golf club. They all seem to get on well," Theobald said.

The SIS equipment offers such enhanced facilities that other provisions at the shop are being improved: snacks will be available, and new seating will be installed.

Theobald said: "They used to be sleepy places some years ago, but that has all changed. SIS will revolutionize betting shops.

"People can now come in and see the races, so they stay longer on the premises. And that is good for business. SIS has 27-inch screens and the sound is much better, too."

The SIS service costs £5,000 a year per shop to rent. The timing of the outfit could have been appropriate for Humphreys, who paid out £21,000 days before the equipment was installed on a successful £12 each-way Yankee bet.

Theobald, a manager at Chislehurst for 18 months, previously worked for William Hill in a Mayfair branch. "It was another world,

betting shops to Satellite Information Services: the contract will be reviewed in 1992.

SIS was set up by the Big Four bookmakers - Ladbrokes, Hills, Corals and Mecca - together with the Tote; they own 50 per cent of the shares, 10 per cent have been given to the Racecourse Association, and the remaining 40 per cent are due to be placed soon.

SIS, already having firm plans for diversification, has the potential to earn substantial profits and racing should use its resources to buy a larger holding. The racecourse, benefiting from an extra £6 million in copyright fees next year, should borrow on the strength of this revenue and acquire as large a shareholding as they can afford.

If the racecourses do invest some of the SIS revenues, a few immediate minor sacrifices may have to be made.

Given the explosion in satellite television opportunities over the next few years, SIS represents an excellent medium- to long-term investment, not only for the racecourses but, perhaps, as a resting place for some of the £6 million reserves held by the Levy Board.

The advent of SIS has produced a significant increase in betting but, in the process, the traditional split of 80 per cent of turnover being bet on horses and 20 per cent on greyhounds has moved to 75 per cent and 25 per cent, and is predicted to shift further.

The trend is bad news for horse racing, and should be heeded by those who believe that the sport's problems can be solved by demanding dramatically-increased satellite licence fees.

If there are signs of optimism in some areas of racing, they have not yet reached the majority of stable lads. The Jockey Club Senior Stewards' Lord Fairhaven, reminded his audience at the Gimcrack Dinner earlier this month that 20 per cent of stables win 80 per cent of prize-money, so significant increases in prize-money trickling down through owners and trainers to stable staff will not have a significant effect on the welfare of lads from the less successful yards.

A minimum wage is agreed between the National Trainers' Federation and stable lads' representatives. Enforcement is difficult but the Jockey Club must ensure those who do not pay the minimum wage receive deterrent penalties.

A final thought: there is one course of action open to the Government which would increase betting turnover, bookmakers' profits, tax revenues and Levy payments - allow betting shops to remain open for evening racing.

When betting duty was first imposed in 1966, bookmakers paid the tax to the Government and spared the punter. As the tax increased, they passed the burden on to punters but offered them a choice of method in discharging the burden.

Bookers could choose to have tax and Levy deducted from returns, or they could pay tax and Levy with stake money, known generally as "tax paid on", which is marginally more favourable to the punter.

Deductions of tax and Levy have been at 10 per cent since 1981. If a punter places a successful bet of £10 at 10-1 and pays tax and Levy of £1 with the stake, making a total of £11, he receives £10 if his horse is successful - being his £10 winnings and the return of his £10 stake minus £1 paid on in advance - which produces a net profit of £9.

If he opts to place £11 to win at 10-1 and has tax and Levy deducted from his return, he collects only £10.89 - £110 winnings plus the return of his £11 stake minus the ten per cent tax (£12.10) - a net profit of £9.79, £1.10 less than tax paid on.

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If the Government adopted this line of reasoning, and insisted that tax and Levy be "paid on" on all bets, bookmakers could still make commercially-acceptable profits from the average 20.4 per cent surplus after the punters' 79.6 per cent winnings. The bookmakers are left with 10 per cent after paying their operating expenses, VAT and other costs.

Eight per cent could be taken by the Government as its present requirement of duty from betting, leaving 2 per cent for distribution by the Levy Board, as against the average of 0.88 per cent of turnover it will receive this year.

The objection to this almost-too-simple solution is likely to be that the 2 per cent Levy payment thus rendered would be regarded as akin to a tax and likely to incur the wrath of the Treasury.

One of the strengths of the argument for rearranging the 10 per cent tax and Levy is that any deductions made at a higher level would provide an incentive for more illegal betting, which would be unpopular on both sides.

Bookmakers estimate turnover on horserace betting in 1988-89 at £1.8 billion and if compulsory tax paid on bets was enacted on the lines we have suggested, the Government would receive £304 million and racing £76 million. The Treasury would receive less in the "tax on tax" - perhaps as much as £30 million less. But can it be persuaded to give up that much in return for growing returns from an expanding betting industry?

And, if the Home Secretary was to go as far as to decide that British racing deserved a share of the betting turnover comparable with other countries, the Treasury would need to concede 1 per cent of turnover, and retain only 7 per cent, giving 3 per cent to the Levy

Board which, on our example, would yield £114 million next year.

This Government has demonstrated on several occasions its faith in cutting taxes as a device to stimulate demand; racing would welcome the opportunity to provide further evidence of the strategy's success.

A lingering radical thought from the 1950s is to establish a Tote monopoly. That might have been possible then but not today; the cost of nationalizing off-course betting would be prohibitive, and would directly contradict Government policy.

It is far more realistic to remind racecourses that they have the power to increase their revenues. There is no reason why on-course bookmakers, enjoying soaring turnover since the abolition of betting tax on racecourses in 1987, should not be organized and ranked in the betting ring according both to turnover and willingness to accept large bets, as they are in Australia.

Bookmakers operating from the less remunerative pitches would pay the present rates; those occupying the more lucrative positions could be charged a progressively increasing premium

Versatile Performance-timer

Course speed

FAKES

Selection

ROWING

Searle a leading light in Musketeers' duel

By Jim Railton

Oxford University held their trials on the Tideway yesterday, rowing over the Boat Race course from Putney to Mortlake. The top two trial eight's took on the guise of the Musketeers, Porteous and Athos, and looking at the talent available, Oxford potentially have a formidable Boat Race eight.

It is possible that Oxford could be coxed by a woman next year. The British Women's Olympic coxswain, Alison Norrish, steered Aramis in a second race against the Oxford University lightweight eight. In the main trial race, two Blues were in opposing boats with the president, Mike Gaffney, in Porteous and the talented junior international, Jonathan Searle, in the coxain room of Athos.

In my reckoning after yesterday's trials, there will be at least six oarsmen leaving in the Oxford crew and competition will be fierce.

Oxford included in their trial crews two junior internationals in Christopher Lewis and Domi-

TABLE TENNIS

Cooke takes on leading colleagues

Alan Cooke, whose three victories improved England's hopes of promotion to the Super Division of the European League in a 6-1 triumph over Italy in the match played at the Leeds Building Society at Manchester on Wednesday, has to take on some of his team-colleagues tonight (Richard Eaton writes).

The English national champion, aged 22, plays in a one-night six-man round-robin event, the MacArthur and Dowie Classic at Brentwood, in which most of England's leading players will be competing for £1,650.

Cooke, tipped to take over from Desmond Douglas as England No. 1 next week, will play in the opening match another of his close rivals and colleagues, Carl Prean, the national top 12 champion, who notched one win in the single and one in the men's double against Italy.

John Souter, the England No. 7, is the other player in their group, while Douglas, Nicky Masou, the England No. 4, and Jimmy Stokes, the England No. 6, are in the other group.

YACHTING

A measure of disagreement

By Barry Pickthall

New Zealand yachtsmen are up in arms over the decision taken this week by the Offshore Racing Council (ORC) not to amend a measurement ruling, made in November, that effectively puts their two yachts for the Whitbread round the world race out of class.

The row, which looks to be heading towards court, centres around a 12-11 vote, taken during last month's annual conference in London, to nullify a ruling advantage originally designed to encourage owners to have their yachts measured by machine rather than by hand without the customary 12 months notice.

The result, according to the New Zealand designer, Bruce Farr, is that his ketch rigged maxi, designed specifically for next year's global classic, rate as much as 0.7ft above the maximum 70ft limit. Either their hulls will have to undergo major surgery or their performance will have to be compromised by cutting sail area in order to rate within the limits, he says.

Peter Blake, skipper of the Steinelager 2 challenger, to be launched on Sunday, suggests that this moving of the goal posts could well spell an end to the international offshore race (IOR). "Our boat has been designed to the 1988 rules and now we are being penalized for our early preparation. It is enough to make anyone walk away."

The ORC's arbitrary decision also has a serious effect on the 50ft level rating fleet. Farr suggests that the change puts out of class two of his latest designs and leaves no time to modify them before next year's first major regatta.

Whitbread committee members also has a serious effect on the serious dilemma. If they attempt to redress this apparent unfairness either by holding their race under the 1988 rules, or extending the rating limit to accommodate the New Zealand boats, they will face equal wrath from other competitors, whose yachts have been designed for hand measurement.

So far, the ORC has refused to address the problem with any draw Coghill's Whiz Integrity and the Malden Great Britain, with an all-girl crew, continue to fight it out for tenth place.

BASKETBALL

Stage set for first ever Israeli-Soviet match

By Nicholas Haring

If the prospects for the World Invitation Club Basketball (WICB) championships from December 30 to January 2 are not quite as "mouthwatering" as the publicity would have us believe, they are at least different.

For the first time, in this, the twelfth annual WICB tournament to be held, two venues will be used for the top men's matches: Bracknell Sports Centre will stage two first-round matches on December 30 and two quarter-finals the following evening. After that, the action will switch to Crystal Palace, previously the exclusive home of the event.

If Hapoel Jerusalem, of Israel, the replacements for Maccabi Tel Aviv, win their first-round match against Palace, they will, the publicity material tells us, feature in the first-ever match between Soviets and Israelis in Britain.

The Soviet national team, the gold medal winners in Seoul, would be their next opponents.

But the moral of the tale should still be "do not believe

THE BETTING SHOP

Some people would bet £1,000 on every race all afternoon. Here, the average bet is £5 or £10, but you can get anything from £2,000 to 20p."

The Chislehurst shop caters for up to 600 customers a week, 90 per cent of them being regular punters. The balance between horse betting and dog racing betting is about 75 per cent to 25 per cent.

"Dog racing is becoming a lot more popular. The other sports we cater for, like football, golf and darts, represent around 4 per cent of our business. Betting shops are changing to cater for public demand. Facilities have had to be improved," Theobald said.

The price of buying a High Street betting shop complete with a licence is reflected in an enlarged selling price, according to Chris Phillips, a partner at Hopley & Baker, a leading estate valuers.

He said that the restrictions relating to the operation of a betting shop are considerable. "You can convert almost any shop into an undertaker's for example, but it is much more difficult to convert to a betting shop. Because it is in a different category that makes it harder."

"This means that shops with existing licences have a considerable advantage when they come to a sale. It is impossible to put an exact figure on it because so much depends on area and location."

But it would be worth many thousands of pounds more than the sale of an ordinary shop which required planning consent and a licence before it could become operational as a betting shop."

WHY RACING WANTS MORE MONEY

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Versatile Persillant can initiate four-timer for in-form McCourt

By Mandarin Graham McCourt, on the crest of a wave at present, should enjoy a field day at Ayr this afternoon when he is fancied to ride the first four winners.

McCourt has struck up a particularly fruitful partnership with Nigel Tinkler this season and the Malton trainer should provide two of the anticipated McCourt quartet in Persillant (12.30) and Lotus Island (2.0).

Other likely winners for the in-form jockey are Tarran Taylor (1.0), a first ride for Greystock trainer Gordon Richards, and Birling Jack (1.30).

Tarran Taylor, winner of last year's Waterford Crystal Supreme Novices' Hurdle and seventh behind Celtic Shot in this year's Champion Hurdle, takes fences for the second time in the Highland Spring/ROA Novices' Chase.

On his first attempt at Wetherby 14 months ago, Tarran Taylor fell at the third and his shrewd trainer decided to put the Patch gelding's chasing career on ice for another season.

That patient policy should begin to pay dividends today when Tarran Taylor is expected to inflict a first defeat on Lakin, who already has victories in a bumper, novice hurdle and novice chase to his credit.

Birling Jack, trained under permit at Kilmacomb by David McGarvey, is burdened with 12 stones in the Glenbrook Novices' Hurdle but the opposition is so weak that it would be no surprise to see the seven-year-old, a 15-length course and distance winner four weeks ago, defy top weight.

Persillant can set the ball rolling for McCourt in the Blair Novices' Hurdle by following up last week's winning debut over timber at Catterick.

A good handicapper on the Flat when trained by Michael Jarvis, Persillant was backed as if defeat was out of the question at the north Yorkshire course and duly landed the odds.

The Persian Bold colt is sure to have benefited from that initial experience and his superior Flat speed may prove decisive against the consistent Depletis.

Lotus Island steps up in class for the Marley Scotland Golden Jubilee Handicap Hurdle after four wins in selling company this term.

Jimmy Jack, held in high regard at Greystoke, will pose a considerable threat if fully wound up but Lotus Island, in receipt of 18lb, can make the most of his fitness advantage.

The Tinkler-McCourt combination also has a leading chance in the Gatehead Novices' Hurdle with Leon but preference here is for King's Harvest, who narrowly failed to concede 8lb to the heavily-backed Homme D'Afrique at Carlisle after winning well at Hexham.

For the day's best bet, though, I have no hesitation in nominating Old Eros to defy top weight of 12st 5lb in the

Winter's walk of courage

Fred Winter yesterday made his first public appearance since fracturing his skull in a fall at his Lambourn home 15 months ago when giving away his daughter, Philippa, at her wedding.

Winter, aged 62, escorted Philippa the 30 yards from a white Rolls-Royce, down the church path to the altar.

It was a remarkable feat of courage by Winter, who still suffers considerable pain from the fall. Initially it was feared he would be crippled for life, but after months of physiotherapy and medical care, he has gradually regained the ability to walk.

Philippa purposely delayed her wedding to Tom Jacobson, who works for a television advertising company, until her father had recovered sufficiently to attend.

"His progress has been slow but sure," she said, "and it was very important to me that he took me down the aisle." A physiotherapist accompanied Winter and his daughter from the family's stables at Upland near Lambourn, for the two-mile journey to the village church.

More than 250 guests attended the wedding, including John Francouss, Winter's former stable jockey, and Charlie Brooks, who has been running the stables since the accident. Most of Lambourn's top trainers were also in attendance. Lord Howard de Walden, a long-time patron of the stable, and Lester Piggott's daughter, Manresa.



Robert Williams saddles Old Eros at Fakenham (1.45) regard at Greystoke, will pose a considerable threat if fully wound up but Lotus Island, in receipt of 18lb, can make the most of his fitness advantage.

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With two runs behind him this season, Old Eros should now be in peak condition and this talented front-runner is clearly in his element around the sharp Fakenham turns.

Another Newmarket trainer likely to be on the mark at the Norfolk course is Jeff Pearce, who has bright prospects of landing a double with Star Maestro (12.45) and Speckyfores (3.15).

Speckyfores need only reproduce the form of his Doncaster run last Saturday to take the EEN Racing Club Novices' Handicap Hurdle. Carrying 11lb more than his long handicap weight on Town Moor, the five-year-old showed he is progressing along the right lines when a close third in a well-contested handicap behind the useful pair, Christmas Holly and Norton Warrior.

Table with 2 columns: Selections and By Mandarin. Lists race numbers and names like 12.30 Persillant, 1.00 Tarran Taylor, 1.30 Birling Jack, 2.00 Lotus Island, 2.30 King's Harvest, 3.00 Brother Geoffrey.

Table with 2 columns: By Michael Seely and 12.30 PERSILLANT (nap), 2.00 Jimmy Jack. Includes Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 3.00 SPRITEBRAND.

Table with 2 columns: Going: good (chase course) good to soft (hurdles). Lists race numbers and names like 10.30 BLAIR NOVICES HURDLE (2906: 2m) (6 runners).

Table with 2 columns: FORM and 1.0 HIGHLAND SPRING/ROA NOVICES CHASE (1,936: 2m) (3 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.11 LAIRO and 2.2122 ROYAL GREEK.

Table with 2 columns: FORM and 1.30 GLENBROOK NOVICES HURDLE CHASE (1,808: 3m 110yd) (9 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.0513 BIRLING JACK and 1.0643-6 AMERICAN CASCARA.

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Table with 2 columns: Course specialists. Lists trainers and jockeys with their respective win and place percentages.

Table with 2 columns: FAKENHAM Selections. Lists race numbers and names like 12.45 Star Maestro, 1.15 Red Shah, 1.45 OLD EROS (nap), 2.15 Man O'Magic, 2.45 High Imp, 3.15 Speckyfores.

Table with 2 columns: Guide to our in-line racecard. Lists race numbers and names like 1.13143 GOOD TIMES and 12.45 FITZWILLIAM SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE.

Table with 2 columns: Going: good. Lists race numbers and names like 1.41691-0 TURN FOR THE BETTER and 12.45 FITZWILLIAM SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE.

Table with 2 columns: 1.15 VANEVY HANDICAP CHASE (22,154: 4m) (4 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.23179-0 INADVERTENT and 2.2947-7 RED SPAN.

Table with 2 columns: 3.15 EEN RACING CLUB NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (1,534: 2m 5f 110yd) (11 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.41691-0 TURN FOR THE BETTER and 12.45 FITZWILLIAM SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE.

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Table with 2 columns: 2.0 MARLEY SCOTLAND GOLDEN JUBILEE HANDICAP HURDLE (1,632: 2m) (10 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.1259-0 ARMY JACK and 1.1223-0 THREEPLAND.

Table with 2 columns: FORM and 2.30 GATEHEAD NOVICES HURDLE (1,888: 2m 4f) (10 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.0121 KING'S HARVEST and 2.1 KINGS HARVEST.

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Table with 2 columns: 1.45 RACING POST SERIES HANDICAP HURDLE (12,127: 2m 80yd) (15 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.1113-0 OLD EROS and 1.4214-0 ZAGAZIG.

Table with 2 columns: 2.15 WIMPEY HOMES NOVICES CHASE (1,534: 2m 5f 110yd) (3 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.2626-1 MAN O'MAGIC and 2.0007-7 CASTLECORE.

Table with 2 columns: 2.45 TURECALL CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS SERIES HANDICAP CHASE (Round 8: 22,322: 2m) (10 runners). Lists race numbers and names like 1.1839-0 HIGH SPIN and 2.1839-0 HIGH SPIN.

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Stepping out: Fred Winter escorts his daughter Philippa to the altar at her wedding in Lambourn yesterday. It was Winter's first appearance in public since his accident last year

Chief Buckaneer lifts Rimell camp at 14-1 on

The fortunes of Mercy Rimell, in her last season with a training licence, continued to take a turn for the better when Chief Buckaneer landed the Christmas Pudding Novices' Chase at Southwell yesterday.

The Kinnerley trainer, who had sent out only two winners this season, was enjoying his third success in four days with Chief Buckaneer, a half-brother to Celtic Chief.

The stable is optimistic that the run of luck will continue when Celtic Chief himself, third in this year's Champion Hurdle, contests the HSS Hire Shops Hurdle at Ascot tomorrow.

"Clyde Brief also runs in the Long Walk Hurdle on the same card and we are hopeful that both will do the job," Mrs Rimell's assistant, John McConnochie, said.

Commenting on the stable's unprecedented lead start to the season, McConnochie said: "It's no good panicking. We have just had to wait for things to come right."

Freelance rider Willie Humphreys, on Mister Boot, and conditional jockey Richard Bevan (Aldro) both broke their collar-bone in falls during the Christmas Tree Handicap Chase, won by Kevinsson.

Linfield-based Finbar O'Mahony saddled his first winner as a full licence holder when involved again led all the way under Ray Goldstein in the Long Walk Hurdle.

Finbar's success was the first of a new concept for the 1990s. The top floor will feature a restaurant catering for 600, making it one of the largest in the north-west.

Finance for the scheme comprises a £1 million loan from the Levis Board with the rest coming from the Tote, the National Association of Racecourse Betting Offices, Burtonwood Brewery, Haydock Park Leisure Company and the raccourse.

Bill Whittle, chairman of Haydock Park, said: "Rather than simply replacing the two remaining stands, we have decided on a new concept for the 1990s."

Arum Lily beaten at 14-1 on

There is no such thing as a certainty in racing, as illustrated by the comprehensive defeat of 14-1 on chance Arum Lily in the Chippinoble Selling Hurdle at Haydock Park yesterday.

Nigel Tinkler's charge was chasing a five-timer against two opponents without a jumping success between them and Graham McCourt appeared happy to bide his time on Arum Lily as Mrs Pleatier, the 9-1 second favourite, cut out the running.

However, Arum Lily found nothing when asked to quicken in the home straight and Mrs Pleatier went on to win by seven lengths.

The four-mile Ronnie Johnston Memorial Trophy Handicap Chase featured a number of Grand National hopefuls but Rausal, the 8-1 winner, is by no means certain to be in the Aintree line-up next year.

Hereford trainer Tom Bailey, opening his account for the season, said: "There are still about three weeks before the National enters close and I will think about it during that time. He is still a bit nervous."

Rausal shrugged off a mistake at the last, and drew away to score by three lengths from Border Lad.

Thomson Jones has recently granted a trainer's licence, will have his first runner with Pulka Major in the Frognore Handicap Chase at Ascot tomorrow.

"As long as Tim considers the ground to be suitable Pulka Major will go," a stable spokeswoman said yesterday.

It is an appropriate beginning for Thomson Jones, for long Britain's most successful amateur rider. He won four times on the seven-year-old last season when it was trained by Oliver Sherwood.

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£2m grandstand plans unveiled at Haydock

Plans for a new grandstand costing more than £2 million were unveiled at Haydock Park yesterday. Demolition of the two old stands, erected at the turn of the century, starts next spring, and it is hoped the latest building work will be completed in April 1990.

The new complex, designed to increase the capacity of Haydock to 16,000, will be built on the site of the existing stands, and will provide much-improved viewing and will incorporate a betting theatre with a 100-inch television screen showing on and off-course racing coverage from BBC Channel 4 and SIS.

The top floor will feature a restaurant catering for 600, making it one of the largest in the north-west.

Finance for the scheme comprises a £1 million loan from the Levis Board with the rest coming from the Tote, the National Association of Racecourse Betting Offices, Burtonwood Brewery, Haydock Park Leisure Company and the raccourse.

Bill Whittle, chairman of Haydock Park, said: "Rather than simply replacing the two remaining stands, we have decided on a new concept for the 1990s."

Table with 2 columns: Yesterday's results. Lists race numbers and names like 12.30 (110yd ch) 1. CHIEF BUCKANEER.

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A repeat of run-out fiasco starts an Australian collapse

From John Woodcock Melbourne Australia were beaten by West Indies in the World Series Cup here last night, more easily than in Sydney on Tuesday...

WEST INDIES: G G Greenidge c Boon b Taylor 57, D A Haynes c Dyer b McDermott 52, R B Richardson b McDermott 44...

Alderman. But the best of the Australian bowling came from McDermott, who concerned himself more with accuracy than speed...

West Indies are looking a very different side from the one that failed to reach the semi-finals of last year's World Cup in India and Pakistan, which Australia won...

AUSTRALIA: G R Marsh c Haynes b Ambrose 50, D C Boon c Dyer b Benjamin 50, D M Jones b W Waugh 43...

It was a curious pitch, lighter in colour and more capable of being stirred than most of Melbourne's, yet difficult on which to keep the score moving...

A difficult choice for Yorkshire

Yorkshire's seven-strong management committee will meet at Park Avenue today to decide whether first-class cricket can return to the famous Bradford venue after a break of three years...

Srikkanth again shines as bowler

Indore (Rentez) - The Indian opening batsman, Srikkanth, did his stuff as a bowler once again here yesterday, taking five wickets at New Zealand were beaten by 53 runs...

Wright, with 43, and Greatbatch fought back with a stand of 55 for the third wicket before Wright was caught.

Welsh selectors must stick to a more limited squad

What is to become of the current Welsh team during the international championship? What the selectors policy so far has shown is that there were some changes in the team which played Romania in the one which played against Western Samoa...

Lowther off the bench at last

The deposition of England's Jonathan Webb as the South and South-West full back this week was made even more intriguing by the selection, on the same day, of Mick Lowther to play for the North, in the final round of the Toshiba divisional championship tomorrow...

Stuart Thresher, the Harlequin, and Simon Hodgkinson, of Nottingham, may be said to be nearest to it because both have played in B internationals, though Hodgkinson of course is a stand-off half for his club.

Dawe is baffled by swift omission

Graham Dawe's commitment to the cause of South-West rugby is beyond dispute. His programme for last Friday, the day before he flew for South West against the Midlands in Nottingham, confirmed that it reads as follows: Up at 5.30 a.m. to feed his animals, then off to the local market for 8 a.m. A dash to the railway station near his Launceston home to catch the 10.15 train to reach Cheltenham in time for training at 2.30. Then, as he puts it, you have to put in a performance.



Inside job: Lowther's duties at Brixton prison have limited his first-class appearances

Welsh selectors must stick to a more limited squad

Even suddenly deviate. Will end taking into account that Bridged were without their six international players on Monday evening, Neath's performance, which saw them score nine tries without reply, was impressively fulfilling. Once more, there was genuine pace to their game which hardly gave time for Bridged to think, so overwhelmed were they with black jerseys. They did not transfer easily to the different evening. A 49-0 defeat reflects rather poorly on a side which is meant to represent the third leading club in Wales.

Bromsgrove find their form

Bromsgrove have a run of nine matches without defeat to erase the memory of some indifferent early results. They drew 15-15 with KES Birmingham last Saturday, having led 15-3 and, under the town club's floodlights, retained their most recent victory, against the Sevens School, Bathurst, from Australia (11-6), through tries by Mike Adebola and Miles Taylor.

Palmerston on song

The New Zealand boys had feared the worst before this game. In the opening match of their seven-week tour, against Sevenoaks on Tuesday, they had fared miserably in the scrumming and lost 10-0. But despite a heavy attack, Harrow failed to exert any telling pressure up front and Palmerston ran out comfortable winners by goal and three tries.

League plan for students

In domestic terms, the men's and women's volleyball teams selected to represent Britain at next year's World Student Games in Sao Paulo are of quality. Both contain a fair percentage of internationals from the home nations.

STUDENT SPORT

NEW ZEALAND: J J Wright c Adebola b Mariner 43, A H Jones c Parry b S Sharma 42, M J Greatbatch c Kapil Dev b Srikkanth 37, A Blain c Singh b Srikkanth 37, J C Kuggelejn run out 7, J G Broadwell b Srikkanth 7, J G Broadwell c Parry b Srikkanth 7, W K Watson run out 5, E Chadwell not out 4, Extras (8, 10, 2, 10, 2) 34, Total (8 wickets, 45 overs) 169.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

Football: Barclays League Second Division: Birmingham v Chelsea, Norwich v Chester (7-45). Fourth Division: Crawley v Torquay, Rochdale v Colchester, Truro v Darlington, Wrexham v Cambridge, York v Rotherham.

BOXING: BRITISH FEATHERWEIGHT WITH WORLD-CLASS CREDENTIALS

Hodkinson on the right path: Britain's most exciting young world prospect, Paul Hodkinson, of Liverpool, could be boxing for the world title next year.

Pyatt eager to step up to a higher class

Chris Pyatt picked up a cut and a bruise at York Hall, Bethnal Green, on Wednesday but neither will have much bearing on his projected meeting with Robert Hines for the International Boxing Federation light-middleweight title in March (Jonathan Randall writes).

SQUASH RACKETS

British Championship and the Maccans Cup in Canada is taking top players away from the Finnish Open.

TRY THIS

WOMEN'S EUROPEAN CUP WINNERS' HANDBALL CUP: Manchester United SSS lost 12-7 to Euxine in the first of their first round, first-leg matches. Tomorrow at Euxine the team, which boasts seven Great Britain internationals, enters the second leg with reserves.

TRY THIS

How to get there: Euxine Recreation Centre, Barton Lane, Euxine (DE1 7JY), admission £1 for adults and 25p for children and pensioners. Entertainment commences with a warm-up match at 8.30 p.m. and the Cup game starts at 7 p.m.

Ironing out fixture lists

The announcement yesterday of a World Squash Federation could be the key to a coordinated international calendar leading to a long-desired grand prix finals event, according to Andrew Shelley, the first WSF director.

Ironing out fixture lists

The International Squash Rackets Federation has done much to smooth the world circuit, but has been powerless to deal with the overlapping demands of some independent promoters. The International Squash Players Association has grown in both numbers and disciplinary influence over the years and recently joined with the ISRF to form MISTC, the Maccans International Squash Tournament Council, which by its very nature left WISPA, the women's player association, out of all its calculations.

Large vertical advertisement for Francis I, featuring a portrait of a man and promotional text.

THE TIMES

SPORT tomorrow...

Eight pages on the best of the action and comment



In colour: Kenny Dalglish's guide to the inside story of Anfield



Women's World Cup cricket showpiece by John Woodcock

Whatever happened to racing's hero horses?



Jonathan Agnew on the pleasures and pressures in the life of a cricketer

Scudamore fastest ever to 100 winners

By Alan Lee

Peter Scudamore's phenomenal winter of triumph reached new heights yesterday as his second treble in successive days at Haydock Park carried him to 100 winners for the season...

Pipe emphasised the dedication behind his jockey's glory when he said: "We all went out for a meal last night but Scud sat with us and just smoked a cigar, eating nothing, to be sure of doing 10 stone today..."

All three of yesterday's winners were trained by Martin Pipe, who was responsible for 75 of the 100, and is himself only 11 short of the quickest 100 winners by a trainer.

Scudamore, who won yesterday on Stepaside Lord (evens), Voyage Sons Retour (1-2) and Fu's Lady (evens), had been bombarded with telephone calls from well-wishers all through the morning and completed his century from only 282 rides.

There seems no end to the domination of this dedicated pair and last night the bookmakers, William Hill, would only offer 4-1 against Scudamore completing an unprecedented 200 winners this season.

His valet, John Buckingham, said: "It is amazing how he takes it all in his stride. Nothing seems to disturb him."

When Scudamore returned after the Boston Pit Handicap on Fu's Lady, his third winner, the packed terraces around the winner's enclosure exploded into noise. Even the traditionally deadpan Scudamore features, pale and drawn from the effort of riding at improbable weights, cracked into the broadest of grins.

Scudamore, who has ridden 100 winners in a season three times before, said: "It is great to have done this, but it is the whole season which matters to me. There will be no rejoicing or relaxing because there is so much more to do."

The ovation stretched on for several minutes and Pipe, himself unemotional by nature, was plainly moved. "It's fantastic, isn't it," he said. "Nobody thought it could be done."

"People are coming up with new records for me to break every day but, honestly, I'm not even thinking about 200, though that doesn't mean I'm not trying for it."



Jump of the century: Scudamore (centre), on Fu's Lady, jumps clear of the field at Haydock Park yesterday to win his hundredth race of the season

END COLUMN

Creator of the Olympic image

By Simon Barnes

Zip-pan back to September 7 Seoul and the edgy hush of the phony war before the Olympic Games began. In North Korea the politicking and the threats of disruption rumbled on. In Seoul the students pursued their ritual confrontations with the police.

Two hundred yards away, in the Hotel Shilla, Juan Antonio Samaranch, president of the International Olympic Committee, was speaking the language of international sport. "These demonstrations are bad for the image of Korea."

It was not the fact of the demonstrations that was the problem. It was the fact that they were being staged as television events, with the careful throwing of Molotov cocktails on to empty roadway, making nice pictures to spread all the way round the world.

I was watching a television programme that goes out tonight on Channel 4 at 8.0 p.m., called Running the Games. The production crew followed Samaranch around for the five weeks of build-up and achievement at the Games: images of a president.

And it is his own abiding concern with image that comes through. Image, the adman's word: we mustn't have empty stands, he said forcefully, it looks so bad on television. As the Ben Johnson affair broke, he had Samaranch doing his best to transform disaster into a propaganda coup: catching Johnson shows that The Olympics Are Clean.

By dealing with image, Samaranch is attacking the core issue of the Olympics.



Samaranch: mystery man

The Games are not about real life at all. Image is all. A well-tanned-out Olympic team is as prestigious as the possession of a national airline. For the superpowers, Olympic success is one of the most powerful public reinforcements available.

The Olympic Games are a media event, and the global projection of the Games is what gives the Games their unique and bewildering status in international power-broking. Samaranch is the man in the middle of it all, his name one to conjure with wherever power and sport meet.

Few people know much about him. He is a Spaniard, former ambassador to the Soviet Union. He makes things happen. But what does he believe in, what are his aims, what makes his pulse quicken?

Nobody knows. Samaranch gives nothing away. He is a visionary, it seems: he is the man who makes it all work. He is the dealer, the appeaser, the peacemaker, the eternal diplomat. He is probably the only man in the world who looks like his passport photograph.

For most of us, it is not the image of the Games that count but the humanity. It is the striving, the victories and, I think above all, the failures that make the Olympics so irresistible. People are stripped naked out there, on the platform, in the ring, on the track: emotionally laid bare before the television cameras.

The Games are about tears and desperation, devastation, disappointment, and those elusive, impossible moments of achievement. The Games are about emotion.

But there is Samaranch, his own emotions carefully hidden, image-broker for the world, making the Games happen, playing every hand with circumspection, and never giving a thing away. The contrast between the Games that I saw, and the stark and chilly efficiency of Samaranch, was prodigious.

Confidence the key to the making of a master jockey

By Alan Lee

The making of a champion - a dominant, all-conquering champion - habitually provokes areas of resentment and denigration. Peter Scudamore can add to all his other achievements a rare triumph over such jealousies. In the unforgiving world of steeplechasing, Scudamore has won the respect and admiration of peers and juniors alike, not only for setting staggering standards of excellence but for the way he has gone about it.

no respect of position, pride or pretty faces. Tough old professionals of bygone days stand united with adolescent apprentices in something approaching awe at Scudamore's pursuit of the apparently unthinkable.

Whenever his name is mentioned, and recently a day has seldom passed without it, the talk is not so much of any facet of his riding but of his approach to a lifestyle which is

Some may not understand his tenacious obsession with the game, some may suspect it to be almost unhealthy, but try to find an enemy and, thankfully, the mission is impossible.

No one is better equipped to speak of Scudamore than Jonjo O'Neill, whose records he is presently eclipsing. O'Neill knows what it is to monopolize the winner's enclosure and yesterday, as Scudamore prepared to take an astonishing seven weeks off

O'Neill's time for the fastest 100 winners, the former champion admitted: "I am getting a kick out of it because I can well imagine what he is going through. I will be sad to lose the record but I'm pleased it is going to a man who gives this game everything."

O'Neill, ironically the school-days hero of Scudamore, quantifies the unseen pressures of a winning run with no foreseeable end. "It is a hard seat to occupy. It is mentally very tiring if you do it properly, booking all your own rides as Scud does, and the more you achieve, the more is expected. If you get beaten on a favourite, people want to know what went wrong."

Asked to nominate Scudamore's greatest quality, O'Neill is prompt. "Confidence," he says. "When you are going as well as he is, you have an inner confidence to take the split-second decisions which win a race for you. Your own confidence also gets through to the horses and relaxes them. Watch Peter ride one from the front and you can see what I mean. But he

can ride any sort of race, any sort of horse. He is that talented."

John Francome, whose crown passed to an impatient Scudamore, revealingly admits: "Pete was always a lot better than I was in his early years. I was very aware of that. Of course, he has improved and streamlined his riding but I honestly don't think he has changed much. He was always very stylish, very determined."

An insight to the champion comes from his father, Michael. Once among the best and bravest of the jockey breed, and now a trainer, Scudamore has watched and helped his son's progress.

"I can well remember his gloomy moods when anything used to go wrong," he says.

"He could be inconsolable. It is easy to say simply that horses run and jump for him and it is true. But I think the main reason is that he rides them on a long, loose rein which relaxes them. He is a good judge of pace and he always looks at one with his horse. Lester Piggott could do that, so could the Moloyas when I was riding. But it is a rare gift."

Scudamore came to prominence under the wing of the trainer, David Nicholson. Indeed, he shared the championship with Francome while retained by Nicholson and mutual respect remains. Nicholson is a man of firm views, frankly expressed, but he still says: "Peter is at the

top because he only ever relies on his own opinion. He deserves it all because no one works harder."

The theme of opinions is developed by Martin Pipe, the trainer. "We all know what a good, effective and often inspired jockey he is," Pipe says. "We are similar types. We're both ambitious but we are also realists. We want to win the Gold Cup but it's no good thinking every horse in the yard can do it. If Peter tells me I should run a certain horse in a seller at Plumpton it is because that is all he thinks he can win. That is the job of a good jockey, just as much as riding the winners, and Scud is far and away the best in the business."

Webb has knee surgery

It has not been Jonathan Webb's week. Shortly after hearing that he had been dropped from the South and South-West divisional rugby union side which plays the North tomorrow, the Bristol and England full back was taken to Southmead Hospital for a cartilage operation which may restrict his rugby until deep into next month (David Hands writes).

Webb felt his knee lock while out sprinting on Monday evening; it was a repetition of an injury he suffered shortly before the South-West played the Australians in October but the knee righted itself on that occasion.

His return depends upon the amount of training he can put in at a time when he is preparing for the first part of his FRCS examinations

Membership scheme is waived for Scotland

By Richard Ford, Political Correspondent

Proposals to make Scottish football supporters join the national membership scheme in England and Wales if they want to see their teams playing south of the border have been dropped. The Government has decided not to go ahead with the idea that had angered Scottish supporters and football authorities, who argued that they were being made to suffer because of the problems facing the game in England.

The decision has been taken after talks between Scottish Office Ministers and Mr Colin Moyinhan, the Minister for Sport, who is to introduce the Government's legislation requiring all football supporters in England and Wales to carry identity cards.

Neither will Scottish supporters have to belong to the controversial membership scheme if they want to travel to Wembley for the biannual

match between England and Scotland. The decision has been taken after talks between Scottish Office Ministers and Mr Colin Moyinhan, the Minister for Sport, who is to introduce the Government's legislation requiring all football supporters in England and Wales to carry identity cards.

ditional fixture between Scotland and England. Scottish Office Ministers have argued that they have good links with the footballing authorities north of the border, that they co-operate closely with the police and were in the forefront of action to crack down on football violence and deal with the problem of alcohol at games.

The Government's plans for the national membership scheme in England and Wales has run into opposition from the police and some Conservative back-benchers with even some Ministers privately fearing problems.

England must wait to hear fate of tour

By Alan Lee, Cricket Correspondent

The fate of England's substitute tour in the spring is now unlikely to be resolved until early next week. The New Zealand cricket authorities, stumped by the sudden refusal of Pakistan to compete alongside England in a one-day tournament, were yesterday investigating means of salvaging the trip.

world that England are still wanted somewhere on the cricketing globe and now, after Pakistan's sabotage, it has badly misfired.

Alan Smith, chief executive of the Test and County Cricket Board, spoke at length to his counterpart in New Zealand, Graham Dowling, late on Wednesday night. Understandably, no firm decisions were taken and Smith said yesterday: "The ball is in New Zealand's court. It is up to them to take stock of the new situation. We hope they can come up with an alternative itinerary which permits the tour to go ahead but there is very little we can do in the meantime."

If, as is to be expected, New Zealand conclude that the venture would be financially folly and political dynamite, England's administrators, could now go into the crucial debate on South Africa at next month's special meeting of the International Cricket Conference without a single steadfast ally. It will be fascinating to see whether this hardens or weakens the current resolve of many to preserve the individual player's right to play in South Africa.

Reaction to the latest crisis was swift and predictable. Ali Bacher, managing director of the South African Cricket Union, claimed that the Pakistan decision was part of an organized campaign by the black countries to ensure there could be no soft compromise on the issue of contacts with his country.

Dr Bacher said: "I suspect that English cricket, and particularly the players, will react with utter indignation but I can tell them that South African cricket in 1988 is buoyant and that we will continue to attract players to come here, coaching youngsters of all races."

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Form for donating to Armenia Earthquake relief, including fields for name, address, and amount (£15, £50, £100).

Chile to fill Rous Cup place

By Stuart Jones, Football Correspondent

Chile were yesterday confirmed by the Football Association as next year's foreign entrants in the Rous Cup. They are to play England on May 23 and, after the traditional enemies have met each other at Hampden Park, four days later, Scotland on May 30.

They beat both Brazil and Colombia in the South American championship last year and it will be remembered that Colombia held both England and Scotland to a draw in last season's triangular tournament.

Although Chile have never won the South American title recent results indicate that they should be treated with respect.

Poland on June 3, could be staged in a largely deserted stadium however and Hampden could be an equally hectic place since the fixture could, by then, be irrelevant.

The FA trusts that the public will respond to the memory of the Colombian skills which illuminated both arenas so brightly six months ago. "Those who missed the match at Wembley, regretted it," a spokesman said. "Those who saw it, enjoyed it."

Shreeves swallows his pride and stays at QPR

Peter Shreeves yesterday accepted an offer from the Queen's Park Rangers chairman, Richard Thompson, to stay at the club, even though he is bitterly disappointed at not getting the manager's job vacated by Jim Smith.

I have learned that over the years... Shreeves has the security of more than two years to run on his current contract as assistant manager, and the Rangers players have been urging him to stay.

Rangers appointed Trevor Francis, although Shreeves, the former Tottenham Hotspur manager and Smith's No. 2 at Loftus Road, was originally given a trial period until January 7 as acting manager.

But a partnership with Francis, whose appointment as manager was announced after Wednesday's 1-0 Littlewoods Cup replay win at Wimbledon, looks certain to be an uncomfortable arrangement - especially as Francis insists he will also continue his career as a player.

Shreeves said: "Last night the chairman asked me if I would stay on and, having slept on it, I have decided to accept. It seems to me the best thing to do for the sake of the club, even though I admit I am upset at what has happened. But you have to be mentally tough in this game and I think

Shreeves, at least, has acted with some dignity in what has become a shoddy episode, but the club, and especially Thompson, will have lost a great deal of credibility. Francis profile, page 39

SPORT IN BRIEF

Brown is 'forgiven'

Kerrith Brown, the British judo competitor, who returned a positive drug test and was stripped of his bronze medal at the Olympic Games, will be welcomed back by the sport at the end of his two-year suspension. Michael Leigh, the chairman of the British Judo Association, said: "We accepted his explanation that he had mistakenly taken medication for a knee injury. When he comes back all will be forgiven."

Medical first

A new diploma in sports medicine was announced by the Society of Apothecaries yesterday. The examinations, to be held in June, will lead to the first open qualification for doctors in Britain.

Duty calls

Steve Tunstall, the former French Foreign Legionnaire, competes for England in the international cross-country race in Cardiff tomorrow, replacing the injured Ramonn Martin.

Hollow victory

Helinski (Reuter) - Mikael Sundstrom, of Sweden, has been stripped of his victory in the Finnish rally after unwittingly taking a banned medication.

Tax inquiry

Amsterdam (AFP) - Soren Lerby, the Danish international footballer, and the former club president Ton Harmsen, have been arrested in connection with an investigation into alleged tax fraud over transfer dealings at the Dutch club, Ajax.

Lyle honoured

Sandy Lyle, who this year won the US Masters title, was yesterday awarded the Golf Writers' Trophy in recognition of his services to European golf.

ARMENIA EARTHQUAKE logo and contact information.